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Charlotte Wood Slocum Lectures.

THE

CHALCEDONIAN DECREE

OR

HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY, MISREPRESENTED BY MODERN THEOLOGY, CONFIRMED BY MODERN SCIENCE, AND UNTOUCHED BY MODERN CRITICISM

BY

JOHN FULTON, D.D., LL.D.

MAY 17 1892
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ERRATUM.

Page 88, line 11 from bottom, for "homogeneity," read *heterogeneity*.

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The Charlotte Wood Slocum Lectures.

The Charlotte Wood Slocum Lectureship on Christian Evidences was endowed in 1890 by the lamented lady whose name it bears, the wife of Elliott T. Slocum, Esq., of Detroit, in grateful memory of the life and labours of the Right Reverend Samuel Smith Harris, D. D., LL. D., the second Bishop of Michigan. Mrs. Slocum departed this life in Dresden, 6th June, 1891.

Bishop Harris,—to quote his own words—"moved by the importance of bringing all practicable Christian influences to bear upon the great body of students annually assembled at the University of Michigan, undertook to promote and set in operation a plan of Christian work at said University, and collected contributions for that purpose, of which plan the following outline is here given, that is to say:—

To erect a building or hall near the University, in which there should be cheerful parlors, a well-equipped reading-room, and a lecture-room where the lectures hereinafter mentioned might be given;

To endow a lectureship similar to the Bampton Lectureship in England, for the establishment and defence of Christian truth: the lectures on such foundation to be delivered annually at Ann Arbor by a learned clergyman or other communicant of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

To endow two other lectureships, one on Biblical Literature and Learning, and the other on Christian Evidences:

the object of such lectureships to be to provide for all the students who may be willing to avail themselves of them a complete course of instruction in sacred learning, and in the philosophy of right thinking and right living, without which no education can justly be considered complete.

The first of the Lectureships projected by Bishop Harris, that for the establishment and defence of Christian truth, was endowed in 1886 by the Hon. Henry P. Baldwin and wife. The second to be founded is that on Christian Evidences, and it is in fulfilment of the earnest wish of the Founder, that the first course is given by the Rev. John Fulton, D. D., LL. D. The Lecturer is appointed upon the nomination of the Bishop of Michigan.

As Mrs. Slocum executed no deed of trust when she placed in my hands Ten Thousand Dollars for the object aboved named, I have thought it advisable to appoint as Trustees of this Fund those gentlemen who are charged with the trust of the foundation for the Baldwin Lecture-ship; viz.,

Messrs. Henry P. Baldwin,
Henry A. Hayden,
Sidney D. Miller,
Henry P. Baldwin, 2nd.,
Hervy C. Parke,

with the addition of Mr. Elliott T. Slocum.

THOMAS F. DAVIES,
Bishop of Michigan.

Detroit, November, 1891.

PREFACE.

As the sheets of this volume have come to me from the press, I have sincerely appropriated the lines of the poet:

Dum relego, scripsisse pudet, quia plurima cerno,;
Me quoque qui feci judice, digna lini;

and if I had in any way sought, or if I had not done all that I could rightly do to avoid, a task which I knew to be so gravely important, and for which I knew myself to be so ill qualified, I should feel that I had been much to blame.

Such as they are, these lectures were intended mainly to clear the way for abler and more competent lecturers by showing first, what historical Christianity is; second, that it is obnoxious to none of the moral objections to which provincial and popular opinions have exposed it; third, that it is in no way invalidated, but marvellously confirmed, by the progress of physical science; and fourth, that it is not so much as touched by any of the so-called results of biblical criticism. Allowing for the conditions imposed by the form of composition, I think this four-fold purpose

may be seen to have been kept clearly in view from first to last.

In a work published ten years ago * I made a critical study of the Decree of Chalcedon as an authoritative, and, to this day, unrepealed, settlement of the Faith of Historical Christianity. I have reason to believe that the arguments set forth in that work have commended themselves to men of widely different tendencies. I have therefore allowed myself to hope that a more popular treatment of the same subject might be useful. If the view which I have presented is just, Christianity is at once relieved of nine tenths of the objections, ethical, scientific and critical, which are alleged against it; nine tenths of all the grounds of the divisions of Christendom appear to have been factitious; the existence of a substantial unity of faith is evident; and the only possible basis of visible unity in the future is made plain.

In a work of this kind originality is impossible, and I should certainly have no sense of humiliation in borrowing from the learned and accomplished writers of "Lux Mundi." The fact is, however, that I did not read that work until these lectures were out of hand, and consequently my thesis, that the Triune God of the Nicene Creed is the only God in which modern science has left it possible to believe, was not suggested by the admirable paper of Canon Aubrey Moore. I have held the same view for thirty years, and the advance of science during that period has tended only to illustrate and confirm it. I am deeply conscious that

* "Index Canonum," New York: E. & J. B. Young & Co.

the treatment of the subject in the Fifth Lecture is defective; but I am sure that it is in the line of truth, and I cannot but hope that it may suggest a better treatment to some far more competent apologist than I can pretend to be.

It is a pleasure to me to know that what I have said concerning the higher criticism of the Holy Scriptures represents not only my own belief but that of Bishop Harris, as he expressed it to me only a few weeks before he sailed on his last voyage. It is a still greater pleasure to believe that he would not have dissented in the main from anything contained in these lectures. J. F.

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LECTURE I.

MEMORIAL AND INTRODUCTORY.

LECTURE I.

MEMORIAL AND INTRODUCTORY.

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them. —REV. xiv. 13.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.—I THESS. v. 21.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. JOHN xx. 29.

Truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it—the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it—and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it—is the sovereign good of human nature.—BACON.

To fear argument is to doubt the conclusion.—NEWMAN.

Our knowledge being very narrow, and we not happy enough to find certain truth in everything which we have occasion to consider, most of the propositions we think, reason, discuss, nay, act upon, are such as we cannot have perfect knowledge of their truth. Yet some of them border so near upon certainty that we make no doubt at all about them, but assent to them as firmly, and act according to that assent as resolutely, as if they were infallibly demonstrated.—LOCKE.

The undulatory theory of light and its radiant energy are accepted facts in the creed of science; yet the ether itself is only a hypothesis, and the undulations are an inference.—TYNDAL.

Nothing worthy proving can be proven,
Nor yet disproven. Wherefore be thou wise,
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith.—TENNYSON.

Believing as I do in the continuity of nature, I cannot stop abruptly where our microscopes cease to be of use. Here the vision of the mind authoritatively supplements the vision of the eye. By an intellectual necessity I cross the boundary of the experimental evidence. . . . . This . . . is the habitual action of the scientific mind.—TYNDAL.

Those who think that science is dissipating religious beliefs and sentiments seem to be unaware that whatever of mystery is taken from the old interpretation is added to the new. Or rather, we may say that transference from the one to the other is accompanied by increase; since, for an explanation which has a seeming feasibility, science substitutes an explanation which, carrying us back only a certain distance, there leaves us in the presence of the avowedly inexplicable.—HERBERT SPENCER.

A science without mystery is unknown; a religion without mystery is absurd.—DARWIN.

In the numberless attempts to attack, or defend, or find a substitute for Theism, the Christian or Trinitarian teaching about God rarely appears upon the scene. . . . . Ordinary people take it for granted that Trinitarianism is a sort of extra demand made on Christian faith, and that the battle must really be fought on the Unitarian basis. . . So far from the Trinity being, in Mr. Gladstone's unfortunate phrase, 'the scaffolding of a purer theism,' non-Christian monotheism was the scaffolding through which already the outlines of the future might be seen. For the modern world the Christian doctrine of God remains as the only safeguard in reason for a permanent theistic belief.—REV. AUBREY MOORE, M. A.

THE opening of a course of lectures founded by the late Mrs. Slocum in memory of the late Bishop Harris, is an event which illustrates in a very touching way the shortness and uncertainty of human life.

It is little more than twelve years since I attended Dr. Harris, then in the very prime of life, in the strength of a vigorous and healthful manhood, and in all the glow of generous and enthusiastic self-devotion, to be consecrated to the high office of Bishop of Michigan. It was then that

I had first the happiness to meet the foundress of this lectureship in the flower and bloom of womanhood, and already enriched with "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends" and many other blessings which are commonly reserved as the reward of venerable and revered old age. Now both are gone, and the place that knew and honored them shall know them no more.

It was not long after their first meeting before these two became friends. They were alike in mind, in taste, in aspiration; alike in loftiness of spirit, alike in gentleness of courtesy, alike in their clear purity of soul. In my frequent visits to Dr. Harris at his See I seldom failed to meet her; and when I met her, it was always to receive from her, for his sake and as his friend, hospitalities so kindly personal that they seemed to be extended to me for my own sake, and as her own friend. Little more than three years have passed away since I met her at his open grave to see the kindly earth close over all that was left of our dear friend, her Bishop and my brother of many years. Only two years more and the shadow of death fell on her, too; and it was then, in the full prospect of her approaching end, that she begged me to edit for her a small volume of selections which she had copied with her own hand from the unpublished writings of Bishop Harris. It is a happiness to me to know that the little book, prepared in memory of him, became a consolation to herself when lying on her deathbed in a foreign land, and that its pages brought her messages, not as from the dead, but as from the living, of that glorious immortality without the hope of which both life and death

are gloomy and inexplicable mysteries. It was characteristic of Mrs. Slocum that, on the very day when she received from her physician what she fully understood to be a sentence of death, she made arrangements for the endowment of this lectureship, and at the same time requested her Bishop, the Right Reverend Dr. Davies, to appoint me to deliver the inaugural course of lectures on the new foundation. It was a duty which I would gladly have avoided; for you will understand, as I have always understood, that the reason of my appointment was not any special qualification of mine for the duty devolved upon me, but only the long and dear and confidential friendship which existed between your late Bishop and myself. In short, the honor done to me was done for his sake, and was meant to be an additional but incidental tribute of love to him. So done and so meant, it was an honor which I could not properly decline.

The subject of discourse proposed to lecturers on this foundation was likewise meant, I think, to be a sympathetic tribute to Bishop Harris. It is commonly supposed that Bishops and other clergymen are morally bound, and are intellectually able, to pass their lives in perfect and unfaltering certitude of all the truths of Christianity. It is not so. There can be no moral obligation to escape the Providence of God; and it is the Providence of God which sometimes permits the truest of His saints to be doubtful, as the Apostle, St. Thomas, was caused or suffered to be doubtful, of divine truths. Neither is it intellectually possible for men of active and veracious minds to escape the sore trial

of doubt in an age like this ; and those to whom the defence and propagation of the faith have been specially committed are required by the obligations of their office to put themselves into special danger of doubt, because, if they would resolve the questions of their age for other men, they must first endeavor to study them so candidly as to appreciate and feel their difficulty. Besides, in the Church, as in all living bodies, there is a continuous process of growth, and growth includes a constant casting out of old and worn material as well as the assimilation of fresh nourishment. Naturally, it is in men of great intellectual and spiritual faculties that this twofold process goes on most powerfully, and, at times, most painfully. They are called of God to travail that in other souls truth may be born without travail and without pain. It was surely not in the nature of your late Bishop to evade that part of his function as a Master in Israel. He did not evade it. When a point seemed to be fairly made against Christianity, he endeavored to appreciate its full force, believing that an honest study of it would result either in a satisfactory solution of the difficulty or in an elimination from his conception of Christianity of something which does not properly belong to it. For years it was my pleasure to see his mind grow in clearness and strength of conviction by that honest method of investigation. I have known the day, sometimes the very hour, when some old misapprehension fell like a scale from his eyes, only to leave essential truth clearer than before. It has been said that he changed some of his views even after he became a Bishop. That is true. He did, undoubtedly, change some of his

views. I doubt whether any single view of his was quite the same in his last days as when I first knew him. It was impossible that the views of such a man should not be changed during twenty years of growth, and I suppose that some changes of his later years were not so much changes belonging to that period as recognitions of a change that had really occurred long before. Yet the greatest change of all did certainly occur while he was Bishop of Michigan. It was then that he passed through one of those intense and almost desperate soul-struggles which seem to be necessary in the education of the saints. In a time of sore affliction, and beside a new-made grave, the light of faith faded and he groped for many days in intellectual and spiritual gloom. I have often thought that the immediate cause of that crisis —for it was a crisis—in his life was largely physical. His weary brain lost for a time its wonted power, and what he took to be an eclipse of faith was rather a collapse of physical strength. Whatever its cause was, it was met with perfect honesty. As he afterwards said to me, it was a matter of life and death to him to ascertain beyond the possibility of further question where he must thenceforth stand. So, for many days he shut himself up in the retirement of his study, and there, alone with God, he searched and proved the groundwork of his faith. Again the light shone down upon him, never more to fade in this world or any other; but after such an experience, no man ever sees things as he did before. Things that once looked large dwindle to insignificance, while other things stand out pre-eminent in new and marvellous majesty of greatness. In the lives of saints

such crises are like passages from dimly lighted chambers into the full light of day. So this crisis was to Bishop Harris. Thenceforth, I think, his Christian faith was simpler, stronger and incomparably more assured and more serene than it had ever been before; but I know he felt that much of the bitterness of that trial might have been spared him, if the present state of Christian apologetics had been more satisfactory, and particularly if the essential verities of Christianity had been more clearly discriminated than they generally are from the mass of doctrinal opinions which are often set forth as essential elements of Christianity. Had he been called to name a subject of discourse for such a lectureship as this, I believe he would have named the Evidences of Christianity; and therefore I believe it was a true and sympathetic insight which led Mrs. Slocum to select that as the subject of a lectureship established to perpetuate his sacred memory.

But she chose it also, I believe, because, in some respects, her own experience was not unlike that of her friend and Bishop. She was no unwomanly sceptic, but neither was she unaffected by the questions of our age. A mind like hers could not fail to understand and feel the force of many of the sceptical arguments which now find their way into all literature, permanent and ephemeral, and she could not be expected to be always ready with an answer. In a word, she suffered more or less—I know not how much—from what has been called "the malady of our time," a malady which will yet prove, I trust, to have been the growing pains of a new spring-time in the spiritual pro-

gress of mankind. Suffer as she might, however, and perplexed though she might sometimes be, she clung with all her heart to Christ and His religion, "believing where she could not prove," and feeling sure that there must be proofs, if she only knew them, of the hope that lived in her without them. So, I think she won the blessing of Him who said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." I think, too, that it was out of her own personal experience that she learned the great need and the high value of Christian apologetics; and while she chose the Christian Evidences as the subject of this lectureship first and chiefly in honor of Bishop Harris, I believe she would have chosen it all the more if it had ever occurred to her to reflect that such an endowment as this would surely be memorial of herself as well as of him.

It is perhaps my duty here to say that she desired the lecturers on this foundation to enjoy and use the utmost freedom in the treatment of their great subject. She did not wish these lectures to be merely formal repetitions of old arguments. Her hope was that successive lecturers would contribute some fruit of their own thought or their own research to the confirmation of the Christian Faith, or at least of some part of that faith, so that living thought might be employed in meeting and removing present causes of religious doubt and perplexity as they from time to time arise.

For my own part I have consented to deliver this inaugural course of lectures on the Evidences of Christianity only in deference to the urgently expressed wish of the Found-

ress and the Bishop of the Diocese. It is a task which few men are competent to perform with satisfaction to themselves or others, and of the few I am not vain enough to count myself as one. I should have felt myself bound to decline it if I had understood it to require of me all that seems at first sight to be included in the title of the lectureship. To present the slightest outline of "the Evidences of Christianity" in a course of six or eight lectures is hardly possible, and if it were, it would tax the powers of genius itself to array and marshal them in such a way as to make them evident to the reason and convincing to the heart. A duty which can never be performed unless some rare and happy conjunction of circumstances shall bring both genius and learning to a work of almost unimaginable difficulty, cannot be the duty required of a lecturer on this foundation. I shall endeavor presently to show the far humbler work which I have proposed to myself in the present course.

First of all, however, allow me to observe that there can be no doubt of the need of fresh presentations of the evidences of the Christian religion. The old apologetics are no longer satisfactory. At the close of the nineteenth century, the intellectual, and therefore the religious, point of view has been notably changed from that of the preceding period. The world in which we live and the universe to which it belongs are not the same world and the same universe to us that they were to our grand-fathers and our great grand-fathers. The world which, even fifty years ago, a Chalmers could imagine to be the spiritual center of the universe, has shrunk into relative insignificance, while the

universe has grown illimitably vast; and in both there has been found the operation of an order which transcends that of mechanical arrangement and seems to rise to that of organic life. In short, whereas our forefathers thought of nature as a vast machine, we have begun to recognize in it a cosmos; and even now, as science prosecutes her varied search, we know not whereunto our thoughts shall grow, nor whether we may not yet be compelled to the conclusion that the cosmos is a living organism.

Naturally, the idea of God has grown with our conception of that which we are wont to call His works. It is a notable thing that dogmatic atheism has perished; if it exists at all, it is no longer avowed; and in believing minds the idea of the great Creator has grown so grandly that the worship of their earlier years now seems to some of them to have been an almost irreverent familiarity. On the other hand, however, there are many who hold it to be impossible for any human being to know anything of the "Inscrutable Power" which they confess to be revealed in the cosmos, beyond the single fact that its existence "is the most certain of all things;" but agnosticism, while it has nothing in common with the deism which prevailed in the last century, is a categorical denial of atheism. Thus it has come to pass that the weapons of Christian argument which were sharp enough in conflict with the atheists and deists of a century ago, are edgeless and pointless against the present adversary. I do not say that those arguments were not substantially sound; I hold them to have been valid arguments against the forms of unbelief

they were intended to meet. Nevertheless, the existing scepticism, which is neither atheistic nor deistic, but agnostic, requires other and different treatment, and, I will add, a far nobler and more catholic conception of Christianity as its antidote, than that which sufficed for the treatment of atheism or deism.

In the bosom of Christianity itself there has been a shifting of the intellectual point of view hardly less remarkable than that which has been caused by the discoveries of science. There was a time when Christians were so called because they frankly accepted Christ as the Son of Man and the Son of God without attempting too precisely to define the meaning of those terms. Soon, however, the subtle Greek intellect demanded, as the Hebrew did not, that the Christ-idea should be philosophically adjusted to the conception of God and the universe; and after all these ages one may perhaps be permitted charitably to believe that even the daring speculations of Arius, erroneous as they were, and disastrous to Christianity as their acceptance must have been, were intended as an effort to reconcile the divinity of Christ with the unity of God. In fact they would have made of Christ a sort of secondary God, and so would have realized the purpose of their author in no way whatever Their actual result was to compel the universal Church, in its corporate capacity, to do what the Alexandrian presbyter had failed to do, that is, to furnish a scientific statement of the essential things of Christian theology; and when the undivided Catholic Church had spoken, that cause of questioning was at rest. Afterwards, in the Euro-

pean world, there came a time—which we may not call an evil time, since all times are necessary, and therefore no time can be evil—when men began to think that a part of Christendom was competent to determine questions of faith and order in the name of the whole body; and then, when Rome had spoken, there was supposed to be an end of controversy. In truth there was an end of nothing; and, so far from ending controversy, the excess of Roman dogmatism, accompanied with enormous papal immoralities, precipitated the revolt of the Reformation. When the authority of Rome was cast away, the reformers felt the necessity of some other authority to set in place of Rome, and that supreme authority they found in Holy Scripture. In the Church of England this supremacy was stated with the utmost caution; and, as the constitution and the essential doctrine of that Church remained as they had been inherited from the primitive Church, many things were already settled for the Church of England which the continental reformers, in founding their new Churches, had to settle for themselves. To them the literal words of Holy Scriptures had an altogether divine sanction; and although the definitions of their doctrine of the Scripture were generally framed with praiseworthy moderation, their descendants began within two or three generations to insist that the Holy Scriptures do not only contain God's word to mankind, but that, in every line, letter and syllable, they are that very and infallible word itself. Among most English speaking Protesants, and even by many members of the Church of England, this thoroughly rabbinical notion has

been supposed to be the only true evangelical belief concerning Holy Scripture. Within the present century, however, it has been rudely shaken by the application of a rigid scientific criticism to the text and composition of the Sacred Writings. Hardly had the method of Niebuhr unravelled the truth of ancient Roman and Greek history than it was felt that the same method of investigation could not be honestly withheld from sacred history, and as soon as textual criticism had sufficiently prepared the way, the higher criticism followed. I am not concerned at present with the results of those researches further than to note that, at every step, the higher criticism has made the Scriptures, as the sole and supreme authority of Christianity, more and more an object of attack, while the discoveries of science have made it less and less possible to defend the claims which popular preaching has asserted in their behalf. Thus the extreme assertions of popular divines on that subject—assertions which are without warrant from the Scriptures themselves, which the Primitive Church never made and never heard, which neither Rome nor her schoolmen imagined, which are not to be found in the catechisms, confessions or articles of the sixteenth century reformers, and which are nothing more or other than a sectarian opinion of certain English speaking Protestants of comparatively recent date—these extreme assertions have been utterly discredited by the higher criticism, and the result is seen in an extreme reaction both from them and from the Christian religion which has been represented to be bound up with them. This is a fact of the time which must needs call for

peculiar treatment from the Christian apologist, since the scepticism it has produced requires rather a vindication of Christianity from the unwise misrepresentations of its friends than a defence against the assaults of its enemies.

These are the two chief difficulties of the present time. It is often said jauntily that they are only old difficulties in new forms, and that they have been fairly met and answered long ago. To a certain extent that is true. But it is not entirely true, and if it were, the new forms of the old difficulties are themselves a difficulty. But it is idle to say that only the forms are new. The discoveries of science which have put so new a face on the physical universe have created a difficulty which is distinctly new; and the critical investigations of the Sacred Writings which have put so new a face on the whole subject to which they relate are hardly less new. How new they are, and how completely new a treatment they require, may be seen if we consider that they have made such works as those of Paley, and such "short and easy methods" as that of Leslie, simply obsolete. In face of the present state of criticism, Leslie's argument is unavailable in its original form; and yet, if precisely the same argument which Leslie applied to the Passover and the Israelites, is applied to the Holy Eucharist and the Christian Church, it can be made stronger and more convincing than ever. Just so, Paley's argument for the divine existence from the evidence of design which appears in nature, while it is as sound as ever against the chance-theory of creation, is wholly inapplicable in its original form to the agnostic theory of evolution, and yet is capable of a restate-

ment which applies both directly and powerfully to the difficulties of agnosticism.

The difficulties of the time will pass away. From bald agnosticism there is already a notable reaction, and ere-long the higher criticism will be followed by a criticism still higher and therefore more constructive. The first turning of virgin soil often brings malaria; but, with steady cultivation and deep ploughing, the malaria passes, while the lands which were once a wilderness continue to yield wealth to the laborious husbandman. Let us not deceive ourselves, however. When the present difficulties have passed, others are certain to appear; and this process will continue to the end of time

As long as men run to and fro on this earth, the sum of human knowledge will be increased; and larger knowledge of things will bring enlarged perceptions of truth. "Truth," said St. Clement of Alexandria, "is an ever-flowing river into which the streams flow from many sides." In our day physical science, history and criticism are pouring countless rills and torrents into the broad stream of knowledge; but it is philosophy which banks the stream, making it a navigable river, not a devastating flood; and it is theology alone which makes that river a true river of God. I pray you not to be alarmed at those two words, philosophy and theology. In the sense in which I use them they mean great things, but they are none the less great because they are very common things. By philosophy I mean simply the universal tendency to compare and classify objects and processes which fall within our knowledge. The child who has observed the difference

between substances like water or milk and other substances like stone or wood has begun to philosophize. When he has learned to call the former liquids and the latter solids, he has made a large advance in philosophy. When he has discovered that all solids can become liquids and that all liquids can be changed into a form that is neither solid nor liquid, his philosophy has reached the higher point in which it finds unsuspected resemblances between things that have no external likeness to each other. When he learns that, so far as is yet known, the same substances which he observes around him exist in the remotest star that gems the sky, that the same forces which he sees in operation here are operative in the furthest regions of the universe, and that there is a reciprocal attraction between every speck of star-dust and the mightiest sun that rolls through space, he has entered the vestibule of that supreme philosophy which discovers unity in the sum of all things and perceives a law of relation between things which are most widely separated from each other.

Thus philosophy leads up to a conception of the one sublime Power in which all things have their source and center, the Power which Christians call God. There are some who say that philosophy must stop there, that it is not concerned with God nor with the nature of God. That, however, I think we must deny, both as a matter of reason and as a matter of fact: as a matter of reason, because it is absurd that philosophy should end with a bare discovery of the sublimest object of contemplation that can engage the intellect; and as a matter of fact, because, in all

the history of philosophy, from its crudest beginnings to its loftiest outreach, whenever the conception of Deity has entered, it has been a fresh beginning, and not an end, of philosophical speculation. I cannot admit, therefore, that theology and philosophy are different things, and that philosophy must end where theology begins. They are different but inseparable parts of one and the same intellectual process. There was never yet a theology without a philosophy of the universe, either true or false, nor a philosophy of the universe—not even agnosticism—without a theology, positive or negative; nor was there ever a time when the interaction of these two did not prove their intimate connection with each other. In short, a rational theology is the crown and summit of philosophy.

Because of the intimate relation between philosophy and theology it is evident that neither of the two can remain stagnant. Certainly philosophy cannot; for philosophy seeks to co-ordinate all the facts which are included in the sum of human knowledge, and as the sum of human knowledge is always increasing, so the horizon of philosophy is ever receding; its standpoint is constantly shifting, and from time to time some new discovery or some more accurate observation requires its earlier conclusions to give place to larger and truer generalizations. In any such case it may chance, as it has already chanced in many, that theological beliefs will be called in question. Then what is called "a conflict of science and religion" may be expected to take place, with some superfluous heat on both sides, but invariably with profit to religion, either

by confirming what is true and permanent, or by eliminating what is temporary and erroneous, in theology.

When I was a boy, what is called the carpenter theory of creation was generally prevalent in popular theology. It was the deistical theory. It was not entitled to be called the Christian theory, since it completely overlooked and ignored the profoundest truth of Christian theology; but it was extensively held by Christians, as it still is; and, in its Christian form, one of its subordinate details was an assertion that this earth and the universe of which it is so small a part were created only six thousand years ago, and in the space of six ordinary days of twenty-four hours each. Even in my boyhood it was considered to be infidelity to deny or doubt that statement. Geological investigations have proved it to be wholly untrue, and biological investigations, following and significantly coloring the geological, have not only proved the inconceivable antiquity of the universe, but that it is a growing and evolving universe, in which creation is still continuously proceeding. I must not now dwell on the theological consequences which this new and nobler conception of the universe suggests; but even here I may allow myself to say that the carpenter theory, with its six days and its six thousand years, and its conception of God as a contriving and creating Being, altogether external to the universe, is well lost if it is followed by a revival of the older, nobler and more truly Christian theology of a living God, inhabiting eternity, working through eternity, eternally creating, and eternally abiding immanent in the universe of which He is Himself the Life, the Reason and

the Substance. The carpenter theory is valid to a certain point against the atheist; but it asserts only a contriving, constructing, and controlling God; and it is no loss to part with such a theory if we regain the neglected and half-forgotten Christian theology of the Nicene Creed.

In the end—and the end comes soon—such a loss is great gain; but it is always painful. When some cherished belief with which our whole religious life seems to be bound up is called into question and assailed with energy, all that is loyal and devout in us is roused to resist the enemy. Some are able to resist successfully, and to rest throughout their lives in the traditional beliefs and theories of their childhood. Theirs is the happiest lot; but it is not the lot of all. As the Apostle Thomas was permitted, "for the greater confirmation of the faith," to be doubtful concerning our Saviour's resurrection, so, in later ages of the world, God suffers others of His children, for the quickening, or enlarging, or purifying of their faith, to fall into bitter doubts of things they have believed. Happy indeed are they who, in the midst of doubt, can still preserve the spirit of faith, neither wilfully refusing any new light of revelation that may be vouchsafed them, nor impatiently mistaking transitory views for ultimate convictions and conclusions, but remembering always that "whatsoever doth make manifest is light," and "cometh down from the Father of Lights," the God of Truth.

When scepticism is merely superficial, that is, when it is a fashion of conceit and a pretence of vanity, it is not respectable—it is a silly sham. When its root is in the moral

nature, and men "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil," such scepticism is both pitiable and abominable. Not such, however, is the genuine doubt of a sincerely truthful and religious soul. Doubt of that sort deserves respect because of its sincerity, and sympathy because it is a sorely painful trial. In the true sense of the word, it is a great temptation. Nevertheless, like many other temptations, it is inevitable. To many moral, social and intellectual reconstructions it is an indispensable preliminary. The saints and prophets are called to it. Many a good man must have suffered from it before the Book of Job could have been written. Nor ought we to forget that before the Son of God was suffered to enter on His ministry, He was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted with insinuations of doubt. Therefore, when doubt is not courted presumptuously, but comes to any man providentially, he ought to remember that, in human life and growth, times of temptation, weakness, ignorance and helplessness have their place and purpose as well as times of strength, wisdom and service.

Honest doubt concerning religion ought to be encountered with calmness. It is not a sin; but it is a grievous sin to treat it dishonestly. If doubt is sent to us; it raises some question to which God intends us to find, or help to find, an answer, and a true one. A man has no more right to delude himself, or to juggle with his own reason, in answering such a question than he has to deceive his neighbor. There is a sin of false assent as well as a sin of wilful unbelief. A Christian apologist ought to maintain

the truth by no argument which he himself does not believe to be sound and true. It would be unworthy of himself and his cause to refuse to see or admit a truth which seems to tell against him. It is his duty to endeavor to appreciate the full force of his opponent's arguments; and unless he does so, it is certain that he will never satisfactorily answer them. Now, I think we must admit that, in dealing with one's own doubts, one ought to be as candid and veracious as in dealing with another's. It often happens that doubts which, for a little while, fill one with uneasiness, pass imperceptibly away, and are felt no more. In that case they are by no means to be pursued, and captured, and brought back. But serious doubts ought to be seriously and veraciously met. If they are simply crushed out or choked down, they are not destroyed, and the homage we may then pay to religion, with unfaith hidden in the heart, is not altogether unlike the homage of him who betrayed the Son of Man with a kiss!

No, doubts, when they are real, must be dealt with, as other realities are dealt with, that is, honestly, fairly, veraciously. But all doubts are by no means equally reasonable or of equal importance. Mere puzzles, for example, are not doubts. If two men are a mile apart, and the one follows the other, walking twice as fast as he, you may puzzle the tyro in arithmetic by telling him that since the distance between them is first one mile, then one half, one quarter, one eighth of a mile, and so on, the second walker must forever be some fraction of a mile behind the first; but not even the tyro in arithmetic will have the least

doubt that when the more rapid walker has walked two miles, he will be side by side with the slower, who will then have walked one. The puzzle in arithmetic involves no real doubt of the fact; and yet there are very many such puzzles in religion which serious people honestly mistake for grounds of reasonable doubt.

Neither does our inability to prove a fact or a proposition necessarily require us to doubt the reality of the fact, or the truth of the proposition. We shall all go to bed to-night with a firm conviction that the sun will rise to-morrow morning; but until it happens, not one of us can prove it. And then, to use the same illustration in another way, not one of us believes that the sun will rise at all. We all of us believe—most of us would say we know—that it is our own side of the earth which will rise till the sun's rays reach it; and yet I suspect that to some of us who are quite sure of the truth of that proposition, the demonstration of it might not be altogether easy.

Again, it is not rational to abandon the reality of a fact merely because we do not know all about it, or the substantial truth of a proposition merely because it is imperfectly enunciated. You remember Milton's beautiful apostrophe to Light?

"Hail, holy light! Offspring of heaven, first born!"

I suppose there is nothing of which Milton felt more certain than the objective existence of light as a real thing, clothing the universe with visible splendor, and tinting it

with hues of infinite variety of glory. Yet, in our day, nothing is more certain than this, that outside of the eye of man, or other eyes which are like the eye of man, there is neither light nor color. There is something in nature which reveals its presence to our human senses, now in the form of light, and then as heat, and again in motion. What that something is we do not know, perhaps we never shall know; but we do not doubt that it exists nor that it appears in what we call light, heat and motion. When it produces in the ether certain wavelets or vibrations of inconceivable rapidity, and when those vibrations are reflected from material objects to the retina of the eye, the optic nerve is unable to perceive the wavelets or vibrations as they really are. The imperfect sensation which they produce in it is light, while that which produces the sensation is not light, but an unimaginably swift vibration of the ether, which our eyes are too dull to perceive. Again, when those vibrations are reflected on the retina from snow, for example, they are reflected, if I may say so, in their perfect tone, and then we say that the snow is white. In Southern seas, some of the light vibrations, falling on the surface of the ocean, are absorbed, and those that are reflected have a tone, which the eye perceives as blue. In like manner, by reason of various absorptions and reflections as from a plate of beaten gold or from the bosom of the rose, we have other tones which the eye perceives as yellow or red. But there is neither light nor color anywhere, only swift vibrations of the ether, till they reach the eye. Then there is light and color; but the light and the

color are in the eye and not beyond it, since they are only the eye's sensation of a form of motion which is too swift to be perceived as motion. What shall we say, then? That there is no such thing as light? Or that it is only an illusion of the senses? Or that since our visual perceptions are partial and erroneous, therefore they are utterly fallacious and untrustworthy? Surely not. Altogether subjective as it is, "truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun;" and the sweetness of the light and the joy of vision are realities; vision, imperfect as it is, is a reality; the eye, though it cannot follow the rapidity of light-vibrations, is a reality; the light sensation of the eye, imperfect and erroneous as it is, is a reality; imperfect as it is, it enables us to perceive at least the existence and certain variations of the reality by which it is produced; and imperfect as it is, it does enable us to perceive a whole infinitude of other realities and to know somewhat of the mode of their existence. None of us doubts, and none of us is so constituted as to be able really to doubt, any of these realities, notwithstanding the fact that we are learning day by day to understand more and more clearly that the reality of none of them is what it seems to us. Before one can have learned that "things are not what they seem" he must first have learned that "things are," and he must also have begun to learn something of what they are.

Again, in religion, as in everything else, we must be content to "know in part."

All knowledge is partial. Scientific knowledge, as we

call it, is partial knowledge, and not generically different from unscientific practical knowledge. A child who plucks a violet by the wayside has as real and trustworthy a knowledge of the flower's existence and of many things concerning it as the botanist who also knows its organic structure, or the chemist who has analyzed its chemical constituents; but none of the three knows anything whatever of the inscrutable somewhat which determines that the growth of the tiny flower shall be that of a violet, and not that of a lily or a live-oak. True science pretends to nothing more than partial knowledge. It confesses that its means of observation are imperfect, that it is able to investigate nothing more than phenomena, that its interpretations of the significance of phenomena are often erroneous, that its most probable hypotheses are not infallibly true. Nay, it admits its terminology to be very largely a terminology of ignorance. It speaks of "time," but does not know whether time is a reality or merely an imperfectly conceived mode of relation. It speaks of "space," without knowing what space is; of "force," but it cannot tell what force is; of "matter," while it doubts what matter is, and whether it is; of "cause and effect" as if they were inseparably connected, and yet it cannot tell what the connection is. Yet science does not therefore conclude that a rational conception of the course and order of the universe is impossible. It is entitled to the name of science for the very reason that, in spite of the partial and fragmentary character of human knowledge, and in spite of the imperfect terminology it is obliged to use—terminology which, at every step,

is a confession of ignorance—it is able to present a rational and intelligible view of the operation of nature as a system of sublime and all-pervading order. More than this is not to be asked or expected in religion. Religion does not pretend to teach all things, nor to explain all things, nor to make known the innermost reality of anything in heaven or earth. If it recognizes power where physical science recognizes only force ; if it recognizes reason where science recognizes order ; if it recognizes life where science recognizes growth ; if it considers causes and effects beyond the present evolution of the cosmos, and affirms that in "the backward and abysm of time" "the things which are seen" can have been made neither by nor of the "things which do appear ;" if it offers an hypothesis explanatory of the living, growing universe in which we live—an hypothesis which no fact known to science contradicts, which contradicts no rational hypothesis of science, and which bridges every gap in the continuity of nature for which no merely scientific hypothesis accounts ;—still it does not profess to teach all things, nor is it to be lightly disregarded because, like physical science, it knows only "in part" and must therefore "prophesy in part." All that is asked for Christian Theology is that it be treated precisely as scientific philosophy is treated, and that it be admitted or rejected as a rational system of belief, on precisely the same grounds as the theory of evolution, let us say, is accepted or rejected. Only, let it be judged by what it is, and not by what it is not; by what it has to say and not by what it does not pretend to say.

By a somewhat devious path, perhaps, we have now reached a point at which I may tell the modest part which I have set before myself in this preliminary and merely introductory course of lectures. My first object will be to clear the way for those who are to follow, by showing what is included, and what is not included, in the intellectual system of "Christianity." I believe that no greater service can be done in these times to the cause of Christ than to make a clear and just distinction between those articles of faith which are essential to the Christian religion, and that vast mass of shifting opinions, true and false, which Christian people have believed, or disbelieved, or forgotten, without impairment or improvement of their Christianity. It is because so many of those transitory and provisional opinions have been falsely represented as essential parts of Christianity that, from time to time, when some one or other of them has come to be discredited, Christianity itself has been thought to be disproved. It is sad sometimes to read an eloquent lecture against the Christian faith, knowing that the lecturer has succeeded in persuading his hearers that Christianity is not true, and then, on analyzing the arguments, to find that not one single fact or doctrine of the Christian faith has been so much as mentioned in the whole discourse—nothing but crude opinions of which the great body of Christians in all the ages never so much as heard! That is one part of the price which Christians pay for their unholy and unchristian divisions. From the days of the apostles until now, nine tenths of the divisions which have rent and marred the Body of Christ

have resulted from contentions concerning matters of opinion which had no more to do with Christianity than with Buddhism or Mohammedanism. Then, by and by, when those opinions have been established in popular opinion as necessary parts of Christianity, they fall again into disrepute, and then, in popular opinion, Christianity itself falls with them. Is there anything in the history of science and religion sadder than the story of Hugh Miller? Miller was a man of true genius, a true Christian, and a man of science. It was his misfortune to have been taught that many things were necessary parts of Christianity which had really nothing to do with it. Believing those things devoutly, he bent his great powers to find illustrations and confirmations of them in the course of nature. As he had been taught that human nature was depraved at its source by the fall of Adam, he was glad, rather than sorry, to believe that in the old red sandstone there are many proofs of a physical fall in other races of living creatures. It seemed to him, and he maintained, that successive species were created perfect, only to fall into subsequent depravation from the type in which God had originally made them. Thus, to his distorted vision, it seemed that animated nature had been nothing else than one long series of creative failures. One would think that so preposterous a view must have repelled belief, but unhappily it was not so. On the contrary, when his own investigations proved his theory to be wrong, when he began to see that in nature every fall had been a fall forwards or upwards, when it became evident to him that his Bible was useless as a scientific text-book, his whole faith failed, his

brain reeled, and he died by his own hand. Believe me, there are many others whose faith has reeled and failed because they have been forced to reject alleged truths which they supposed to be essential to the Christian faith. If, then, I shall be so fortunate as to be able to discriminate the verities of Christianity from opinions or beliefs, whether true or false, which have been confounded with that faith or have been erroneously represented as essential parts of it, I shall have done some service to the Christian religion, by preventing some of those unhappy misconceptions of it which so often lead to loss of faith.

Even in respect of the essential articles of Christianity I shall hope to point out a distinction which may be worthy of your careful consideration. It is usually thought that the essential doctrines of Christianity are many, that they are all propounded in the same dogmatic way, and that they are all intended to be held in the same way. Now, nothing could be further from the truth. The dogmas of the Christian Faith are few; and they are not all set forth, nor are they all intended to be held, in the same way. I should be afraid at this time to tell you how few the pure dogmas of Christianity are; but I am not afraid to say that some of the Christian dogmas are symbolical or parabolical, not pure dogmas at all, but illustrative and approximative statements of divine truths which human language cannot perfectly express, because imperfect human reason cannot perfectly comprehend them. If I can thus help you to see in Christian Creeds not fetters of the intellect and shackles of the reason but helpful aids to rational and hopeful faith,

I shall have done something to prepare the way for other and more competent apologists.

In the direct discussion of the Christian Evidences I shall touch but two points, and I shall touch them rather by way of illustrating a line of argument which I believe to have been too much neglected than for any more ambitious purpose. In my opinion Christian apologists have held themselves too much on the defensive. I believe they might find advantage in what I should call the method of appreciative attack. For instance, I shall endeavor to show in the fifth lecture that if we should admit all the facts which are alleged, and adopt the method of argument which is used by agnostic evolutionists like Mr. Spencer, the result would bring us, not to agnosticism, but rather to the profound and Christian theism of the Nicene Creed; and in the first part of the sixth lecture, I shall endeavor in like manner to show that if we should admit the largest conclusions of the most destructive criticism of the Holy Scriptures that has any credit among men of recognized critical authority, the essentials of the Christian Faith would nevertheless remain unmoved and unscathed. It is very possible that I may not succeed in showing you these things as clearly as I believe I see them; but even so, my failure may perhaps suggest a line of argument which some other and abler lecturer may follow more successfully than I.

LECTURE II.

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

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HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY TO THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA.

When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth.—JOHN xvi. 13.

Ye shall be witnesses unto Me . . . . unto the uttermost parts of the earth.—ACTS i. 8.

The Christ does not come into the world as the Founder of a religion. —MULFORD.

Every idea must have a visible unfolding; a habitation is necessary to a principle; every dogma must have a temple.—HUGO.

In its earliest usage, therefore, catholic means universal as opposed to individual, particular. The Church throughout the world is called catholic, just as the resurrection of all mankind is called catholic. In its later sense, as a fixed attribute, it implies orthodoxy as opposed to heresy, conformity as opposed to dissent. Thus, to the primary idea of extension are superadded also the ideas of doctrine and unity. But this later sense grows out of the earlier. The truth was the same everywhere, *quod semper*, *quod ubique*, *quod ab omnibus*. The heresies were partial, scattered, localized.—LIGHTFOOT.

The life of the Spirit has its witness to the world in the Church.

The Church is the company of all faithful people.

The Church has an organic unity and life.

The Church is the witness to the life of the Spirit in humanity. It is not the source of the life of the Spirit, but the witness of it. The Spirit is not the gift of the Church, but the Church of the Spirit. The words of faith—which cannot be transposed—are, "I believe in the Holy Ghost; in the Holy Catholic Church."—MULFORD.

The function of the Church with regard to truth is primarily to bear witness to that which has been revealed. It does not primarily reveal; it tells of the truths which have been embodied in the historic life of Jesus Christ or explained in His teaching. One is its Teacher; one is its Master, even Christ. It holds a faith once delivered to the Saints. Hence, from the first, there grew up some authoritative formula, in which we can see the germ of the later creeds, which each Christian missionary would teach his converts. The Church is thus primarily a witness; the strength of its authority lies in the many sides from which the witness comes, but the exigencies of controversy, and indeed of thought even apart from controversy, rendered necessary another function in respect to truth. The Church was compelled to formulate, to express its witness in relation to the difficulties of the time. . . . . Its first instinct is, as the first instinct of friendship would be, to resent intellectual analysis and dogmatic definition. But as the need of telling others about a friend, or defending him against slander, would compel us to analyze his qualities and define his attractiveness, so it was with the Church's relation to the Lord.—REV. W. LOCK, M.A.

BEFORE we can consider the Evidences of Christianity with profit, or even with intelligence, it is necessary to understand what the Christian religion is. Only then can we know whether its evidences are worth considering, and, if so, what they ought to be.

I shall not weary you with discussions of the derivation and significance of the word religion. Religion is a fact in human experience, and it is with the fact of religion that we are now concerned. Moreover, religion is an universal fact in every stage of normal human development. It is said, indeed, that on the face of all the earth there are a few obscure tribes which are wholly destitute of religion. I apprehend, however, that this assertion means only that, in those tribes, the presence of religious sentiments or ideas has not been ascertained; and further investigation might

conceivably discover unsuspected evidences of a superstitious origin, that is to say, of a base religious origin, of some of the most ordinary customs of those degraded people. It is needless, however, to insist on this point. It is sufficiently well expressed by Hume, who says: "Look out for a people entirely destitute of religion; if you find them at all, be assured that they are but a few degrees removed from brutes."

Religion is pre-eminently a social fact. I do not at all mean that it is not a personal affair of the individual. Every religion affects and controls the individual; it often does so most effectually when the individual himself is utterly unconscious of its influence; and the loftier a religion is, the more intensely personal are the sentiments of duty and devotion with which it inspires its individual adherents. Yet history testifies that no religion has ever been known to flourish except as a family, or tribal, or national, or otherwise social institution. No religion was ever yet invented or originated by an individual. Every religion has been a social growth. Men who are called founders of historical religions have never been more than reformers of existing religions—prophets of truths which other men have been ready to accept because those truths were already latent in the religious consciousness of the time. The Christian religion itself did not originate as a novelty, but as the fulfilment of an earlier religion; and the Christian religion claims to be the most pre-eminently social of all religions. At the very outset it was sent to "all nations"; it was intended to unite mankind in one universal brother-

hood; and although the Christian Church has been rent by human folly and perversity into innumerable warring sects, societies and Churches, every one of these, even in its unchristian isolation, bears unconscious testimony to the essentially social character of the religion of Christ. They avow their allegiance to "one Master." They profess to hold that all true Christians are members of "one Body," that they are "members one of another," and that, in the obedience of "one Lord," in the holding of "one faith," and in the enjoyment of "one hope," they have all received the sacramental pledge of "one baptism." All Christians believe themselves to be in vital spiritual union with one and the same Divine Head, and consequently not only with other members of their own Church or sect, but with all true Christians, in this world or beyond it, who have ever lived. Thus, in the midst of schism and all its evils, the universal Christian conscience testifies that every schism is a crime against the social constitution of the Church of Christ.

In all religions which are not merely superstitions, and certainly in Christianity, we find these three things: doctrine, worship and duty. Every religion acknowledges some Object (or objects) of supreme veneration, requires or recommends some form of worship to be addressed to that Object, and sets forth some code of ethics which it declares to be religiously obligatory. Here again, exceptions prove the rule. Buddhism, for example, has neither God nor gods; but that defect is confessed and supplied by the superstitious worship of beings who are not gods.

Shintoism has no code of ethics; but its adherents supply that lack by adopting the ethics of Confucius. Mystics of all religions, whenever they have professed to abandon external rites of worship, have invariably fallen into formalism.

We may assume, then, that these three parts are to be found in all religions; but we must not expect them to be equally balanced in all religions, nor equally prominent at all times and in all places in the same religion. At one time or in a given place we may find that the doctrinal or dogmatic predominates; in another, the ritual and liturgical; very seldom the ethical; and when the ethical does apparently predominate, it is often because matters of external observance have been elevated into indispensable duties. In Christianity, most assuredly, there are these three parts: doctrine, worship and a code of morals; no one of the three can be excluded from it. Again and again the Founder of Christianity said, "Believe!" There must, therefore, be something in Christianity which it is necessary to believe. He said, "After this manner pray ye"; "Do this in remembrance of Me"; "Make disciples of all nations, and baptize them." Thus it is evident that prayer and sacraments are original and indispensable parts of Christianity. But again, nearly all of our Lord's personal teaching was ethical; and, therefore, when He commanded His Apostles to teach their converts "all things whatsoever I have commanded you," we must infer that the ethical teaching of their Master was to be the most prominent part of His religion.

All this is plain enough; but if we now ask representatives of Christianity to tell us what Christianity is, we may expect to hear very different answers. Their doctrines are different; one devoutly believes what another vehemently denies. Their worship is different; one regards as obligatory what another condemns as superstitious. Only in morals do they all, or nearly all, agree; but in morals, too, they differ when external observances are elevated to the place of moral obligations. In this present age, then, is it possible to discover what essential Christianity is? Why should it not be possible? Students of physical science encounter many such apparent impossibilities, but they refuse to confess the impossibility. In the case of the domestic pigeon, for example, which human curiosity and caprice have bred into such extraordinary varieties, the naturalist declares that under every artificial variation the original type of the common ancestry remains constant. He affirms that if artificial conditions and interferences were removed, the domestic varieties would revert to that common and original type. He has no hesitation in pronouncing a wood dove, a carrier pigeon and a pouter pigeon to be of the same species, nor does he doubt that the wood dove is nearest to the original type of the species, while the carrier has been produced by the exceptional development of an original faculty, and the pouter by the persistent development of an individual deformity. Now, if we should apply the historic method to the questions before us, since we know that all the existing variations of Christianity have been derived from one and the same orig-

inal, we might surely expect to find the essentials of Christianity constant, though often obscured, in each and all of them. In some we should discover evidences of orderly and normal development, and again in others cultivated eccentricities and deformities. We might expect to find reason to believe that if artificial conditions and interferences were removed, if individual, local and sectarian pretensions were renounced, and if the normal social spirit of Christianity were once more to be brought into free and universal operation, the mere elimination of exceptional idiosyncrasies would bring the universal and essential elements of Christ's religion so clearly into evidence that they could not be mistaken. Unfortunately that decisive experiment cannot be made; and yet I believe that, by a calm and rational application of the historic method, we can nevertheless ascertain the essentials of that world-wide Christianity which Christ came to establish, and which all Churches, sects and denominations, calling themselves Christian, profess to represent. In this investigation we must treat our subject as we would treat any other subject of historical interest; and I venture to believe that in the degree to which we shall honestly and veraciously do so, to that degree will our conclusions be rationally and religiously satisfactory. Let us, then, for the moment, lay aside all personal prepossessions. Let us forget, if possible, the shibboleths of modern denominational Christianity. Let us interrogate the undivided Church of Christ. Let us inquire of it what original Christianity was, and how it grew and what it became. If it gives an answer to our queries,

that answer will tell us what essential Christianity is and what modern Christianity ought to be.

Let me again remind you that the first fact which strikes one in the early history of Christianity is its pre-eminently social character, in short, the unity of the Christian Church. Next to faith in Christ, I should say that the sense of brotherhood between all who held that faith was the most striking characteristic of the first disciples. No man among them seemed to think that anything he had was really his own so long as any other brother was in need. In matters temporal, as in matters spiritual, they were all of one heart and of one mind. Yet, when we examine into details, we find that their hopes and sympathies were very much narrower at first than one would expect from the teaching of their Master. He had told His apostles that they were to "go into all the world," to "preach the gospel to every creature," to "make disciples of all nations," and to "baptize all nations" in His Name. Yet, for seven years at least, and possibly for eleven years, after His ascension, the disciples seem never to have thought of the plain meaning of those commands. They remained, as He had bid them remain, at Jerusalem, teaching and preaching to the Jews of the Dispersion who thronged yearly to the Holy City, and so completely were they absorbed in that work that they do not seem so much as to have thought of the greater work to which they were ordained. True, some of them did follow the example of Jesus by preaching the Gospel to the circumcised Samaritans who professed allegiance to the law of Moses, and

there is one solitary instance of the baptism of an Ethiopian who may very likely have been an Israelite by blood. But it was not for seven years, nor then except as the result of a special revelation, that the Apostles and the Apostolic Church were brought to understand that "now to the Gentiles also had God granted repentance unto life." When Peter acted on that belief, his conduct was at first severely blamed. "The Apostles and brethren," that is, the Christian community, came together to hear his account of it, and it was only by the acquiescence of the Church that the matter was settled. Thenceforth and forever it was recognized as an elementary principle of Christianity that it is an universal religion for "all the world," and that no man may be excluded from the Christian Society on account of race distinctions.

It was probably three years later that another most important matter was settled in precisely the same way. It was now understood that Gentiles were to be received into the Church; but another point remained to be decided. It is possible, and it seems to be probable, that Cornelius, after his baptism, voluntarily submitted to the obligations of the Mosaic law; and when the Gospel came to be preached at Antioch in Syria, some of the Jewish Christians insisted that unless the Gentile converts were circumcised and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved. This was a vital question. On its right decision would depend the very character of Christianity as a religion. If the national law of Moses was obligatory on the Christian Gentiles, or, in other words, if a Gentile must become a Jew in

order to become a Christian, then Christianity was merely a sect of Judaism, like Phariseeism or Sadduceeism, and not an universal religion for "all nations."

It is interesting to see how this great matter was settled. In the first place, it was not settled by the judgment or opinion of individuals. Personal opinion and personal feeling seem to have run high; for there was "no small dissension and disputation," which not even the authority of Paul and Barnabas availed to terminate. Neither, in the next place, was it settled by local authority. The sacred story shows that the Church in Antioch was heartily agreed with Barnabas and Paul; but this was a matter which concerned the whole Christian Community, and therefore it was loyally submitted to the united judgment of the Apostles, Elders and Brethren at Jerusalem, including the immediate followers of Christ, and in all probability members of all the Christian Churches. So, "the Apostles, Elders and Brethren came together (with the representatives sent from Antioch) for to consider of this matter;" and again we find that no merely personal or individual judgment was decisive. There was "much disputing" to begin with; but nothing came of it. Then St. Peter reminded them of the adjudicated case of Cornelius, and insisted that it covered the case before them. This was a strong point; and if Cornelius had not conformed to the Mosaic law, it was a decisive point. But it does not seem to have settled the question at issue, though it secured a quiet hearing to Barnabas and Paul while they told the signs of divine approval which had accompanied their work at Antioch. Then St. James

the Just, who seems to have presided in the council as Bishop of Jerusalem, summed up the case and declared his judgment against requiring Gentile Christians to conform to Judaism. It was only after all these deliberations that "it pleased the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church," to send messengers to Antioch with a letter in which they said that the judgment of St. James had "seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to them." That judgment was accepted and obeyed at Antioch and in all Christian Churches everywhere; and so it became, or rather, it was admitted to be, a fundamental article of the constitution of organized Christianity.

This rational and orderly way of settling matters of common concern by common consent was the way of wisdom, peace and unity in the infant Church. It contained something more than the germ principle of constitutional parliamentary government; but it would have been inconsistent with the principle of federative government, which is essential to a world-wide community, if it had interfered with the free control of local affairs by local authorities. That the Christian Commonwealth from the very first admitted and acted on both of these essential principles is the fact which I shall next endeavor to show.

It is often said that the Apostolic Church had no Creed, no Bible and no Liturgy, and it is sometimes confidently assumed that it was a great advantage to the Apostolic Church that it had none of these three things. Well, the statement is not true. The Apostolic Church had a Creed, it had a Bible and it had a Liturgy. It is perfectly true that

the Creed, the Bible and the Liturgy of the Apostolic Church were all in a state of growth; and no doubt, the Divine law of growth, which brings first the blade, then the ear, and after these the full corn in the ear, has its advantages at every stage, if we could only know what they are. It is all for good that an unconscious babyhood precedes the prattling infancy which insensibly passes into youth and grows into perfect maturity of human life; yet it is not in the beginnings but in the completion of growth that perfection is reached. So, in the infant Church of the Apostolic age, there is a lesson to be learned in the art of planting infant Churches, which it would be well for the Church and the world if missionaries to the heathen studied somewhat more closely than they do; but unless it is desirable for men or Churches to remain forever in a state of infancy, we must study not only what the infant Church was, but how it grew, and what, under God's promised guidance, it became. In respect of the three matters mentioned it is not difficult to do so.

The Church of the Apostles had certainly a Creed. Unless Baptism meant nothing definite, the baptized must have confessed their faith in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, into whose Name they were baptized by Christ's command. That brief formula is the essential substance of all true Christian Creeds. In the unchangeable formula of Holy Baptism, says Dorner, "the treasures of immediate faith are gathered up into a sentence, though not yet formulated into a doctrine." This is well said; but the doctrine is in the sentence; and to intelligent human beings

some brief outline of the meaning of the doctrine must always have been indispensable.

Naturally the teaching of that doctrine would begin with some brief account of the life of Him who is the Author and Finisher of the Christian Faith; and I, for one, am deeply and unalterably convinced that, long before the date of any of the Four Gospels as we now have them, there was a shorter elementary gospel which was afterwards made the basis of the three synoptic Gospels. I can not here enter fully into the argument for this belief; permit me, however, to give it in very brief outline.

In the first place, nothing could be more natural than that the numerous converts from all parts of the civilized world who were baptized at Jerusalem in the early days of the Church should desire to carry with them to their homes some brief authentic account of the Divine Life which is the essence of the Gospel; and nothing could be more natural than that the Disciples who were the companions and chosen witnesses of that Life, should be willing to gratify that desire. The evidence that this was done seems to me to be overwhelming. The student of Shakspeare finds little difficulty in tracing the origin of his plays in tales and histories which are yet extant. Now, if it were to be found that Shakspeare and two other poets continually used the same language, word for word, and sometimes line for line, or even paragraph for paragraph, only one of two inferences would be possible: Either two of them must have copied from the third; or else all three must have copied from some other writer. That is precisely the

fact to be accounted for in the three synoptic Gospels. To such an extent is their language identical that if we strike out of each of the three every word and syllable that is not contained in both of the other two, there actually remains in each an intelligible life of Christ, with all its most remarkable incidents. Now, a bare inspection of these three Gospels proves that no one of the three is an enlargement or abridgement of the other; and an examination of their parallel passages shows that in many cases two of the three have identical words, phrases and sentences, while the third has either no corresponding passage or else tells the story in different language, and with some variation of detail.

What conclusion can we draw from these facts but this, that all three of these evangelists had before them an earlier and briefer Gospel, which each of them substantially adopted, but to which each of them made such additions from other authentic sources as were necessary to complete it for the purpose he had personally in hand? No other conclusion seems to me to be possible. If it is correct, then we may suppose that the synoptic Gospels, as they were written, would speedily take the place of the original and briefer Gospel, as later editions of any work invariably take the place of earlier and less perfect editions; and when, after a still longer time, the Churches all the world over came to possess all three of the synoptic Gospels, and also the later Gospel of St. John, the original elementary Gospel would quite naturally pass out of sight.

It is an assumption, then, and a false assumption, to say that there was no Bible in the infant Church. There was

the whole of the Old Testament, and we have now seen that, in all probability, there was at least a brief Gospel of undoubted apostolical authority not long after the day of Pentecost. As the years passed, the Four canonical Gospels were composed or compiled, the Epistles were written, and at last the Revelation of St. John completed the New Testament as we now have it. But here another fact appears, which must not be overlooked. There were two editions of the Old Testament, the original Hebrew and the Septuagint Greek, and these two were by no means identical, since they differed in many particulars, and the Septuagint contained whole Books which were lacking in the Hebrew Bible. Then, in the formation of the New Testament, we learn from St. Luke that "many had taken in hand" to write Gospels, and some of those Gospels were anything but trustworthy. There were epistles, too, which are still extant, from the Apostle Barnabas and from St. Clement of Rome, which were regarded by many as of apostolical authority, and which were long read in public worship, while in many Churches the so-called "Catholic Epistles" of James, Peter, John and Jude were not read at all. We have therefore to ask how "the canon" of the Scriptures, Old and New, was settled in the Christian Church.

In one sense of the word it never has been authoritatively settled for the whole Christian Community. But so far as it has been settled, it has invariably been settled in one way, namely, by common consent. The first list of the Books of Scripture which has come down to us was made

at the Council of Laodicea in the fourth century. It is not the same as any list of canonical Books now accepted in any Christian Church. It admits some of the Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament, and it excludes, or rather, it does not mention, the Apocalypse. Other later lists differ more or less from the Laodicean list and from each other, and so they continued to do in different Churches, and at different times even in the same Church. The Canon of the Church of Rome was not finally settled until the Council of Trent, A. D. 1546. The Canon of the Church of England was settled in 1553. The Canon of the Greek Church continued for many centuries to retain two Epistles of St. Clement, and it was not until 1672 that a Council at Jerusalem adopted the Canon of the Church of Rome. Notwithstanding these differences, and they were both numerous and apparently capricious, there never was any dissension among Christians on the subject. The word "canonical" shows how the matter was regarded. Different Provinces settled for themselves the Books which ought to be "allowed to be read in Churches," and they adopted a canon or rule to that effect. No Church ever pretended to dictate a canon to another Church on that point. No General Council of the whole Christian Church ever undertook to dictate a canon of Holy Scriptures to local Churches. The old theologians held that "the authority of Holy Scripture is from God alone," not, as is sometimes foolishly said, from the Church; and therefore the acceptance of particular Scriptures has always been left to the free action of particular Churches, according to the

light which they have severally had. The end is a substantial agreement of all Churches.

Let us now see how liturgical arrangements grew in the Apostolic Church. So long as the temple stood, the Christians of Jewish birth continued to observe and join in its appointed services, though they did not fail to assemble together for Christian worship. The Gentile converts, as we have seen, were not required to conform to Jewish usages; and after the destruction of the temple, Jewish Christians also were freed from an obligation which even they had long felt to be burdensome. But they were not therefore released, nor did they wish to be released, from the duty of public worship; and they were not destitute of a seemly ritual. The forms of the synagogue, which had been sanctioned by the personal use of Christ Himself, were familiar and acceptable to all the Jewish Christians. It was the invariable custom of the Apostles, wherever they went preaching the Gospel, to deliver their message first of all to their brethren after the flesh; and this they usually did at the Sabbath services of the synagogues and oratories which were to be found in all cities and towns of importance. When the Christians were reluctantly compelled, as at Corinth, to quit the synagogues and to establish separate congregations of their own, there is no reason to suppose that they abandoned the edifying order of worship to which they were accustomed, or that they had any difficulty in adding to it the sacramental worship of their new faith. Such, in fact, appears to have been the usual course; and experts in liturgies, like the late Dr. Freeman, are able to

trace the origins of the daily services of our English Book of Common Prayer back through the breviaries of the middle ages to their fountain head in the Eighteen Prayers of the Synagogue. All this, however, was left to take its natural course as times and occasions and the edification of different communities required. There was no commandment of the Apostles on the subject.

Even in the celebration of sacraments no nicety of liturgical arrangement was prescribed by the Apostles; and in this, as there was no old order by which to be guided, it is not strange that there were instances of gross irregularity. In the instructive case of Corinth, for example, it is as certain as it is astonishing that, after enjoying the continuous personal ministrations of an Apostle for eighteen months, the Corinthian Christians still regarded the Lord's Supper as a social meal, and that some of them, in celebrating what they supposed to be the Lord's Supper, behaved with unbrotherly selfishness, and indulged their appetites to drunkenness. It was after they had fallen into this enormous and incredible error that the Apostle wrote to instruct them in the nature of the sacrament and the indispensable formula required in its celebration. It is probable that he subsequently prescribed the order of a fuller Liturgy; for, in his epistle, after he had given them the indispensable formula of the "canon," he added, "The rest will I set in order when I come." There are not a few interesting evidences of the existence of noble sacramental Liturgies in the Apostolic Church; but there is no evidence that the Liturgies of all the Apostolic Churches were the same. If we

are to judge from later developments, various Liturgical types must have begun to appear at a very early period, in all of which the indispensable formula was religiously retained, while subordinate and accessory details were added and altered in accordance with the tastes and tendencies of local Churches. Nowhere was the essential part omitted or mutilated; and nowhere was it supposed that any other part was to be prescribed to local Churches by any external authority. Thus, in the Primitive Church, the utmost freedom of local action was experimentally proved to secure, rather than to endanger, the essentials of a right celebration of Christian worship.

The early Liturgies afford the best imaginable proof of the continued purity of doctrine in the Churches of the first three centuries; because religious worship always corresponds to religious belief, and if the belief of the early Christians had been depraved during those ages of persecution, the change would surely have left its mark on their Liturgies. Consequently when we find that the various liturgies, with whatever difference of local form, remained substantially the same in doctrine, we are entitled to infer that the one faith, which was once delivered to all, had been kept by all in its original purity. It is improbable, to say the least, that this would have happened if the widely separated Churches of India, Persia, Asia Minor, Syria, Greece, Northern Africa, Italy, Gaul, and Britain had not been at pains to discriminate and emphasize the essential elements of their common faith. It is therefore intrinsically probable that, from the earliest times all Christian Churches

must have had brief summaries of the Christian faith which we should now call creeds. It is probable, too, that candidates for Baptism would be required to make their profession of faith in some satisfactory way before the Church, and since most candidates were illiterate persons who could not be expected to do so in terms of their own choosing, it would be natural that a brief summary should be provided for them.

Such, undoubtedly, is the historical fact. There are some reasons for believing that the Apostles themselves set forth such summaries. Thus St. Paul bids Timothy "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me," and elsewhere he speaks of "that good thing which was committed unto thee." It is reasonable to suppose that "the form of sound words" which Timothy had heard from St. Paul was the "good thing" he was exhorted to hold fast; and unless it was a liturgy, it is difficult to imagine what it could be unless it was a Creed. I am inclined, however, to believe that it was a liturgy, or some part of a liturgy; because, if it had been a Creed, it would surely have been preserved and regarded as an indispensable formula by all the Churches to which it was communicated. Now, the strange thing is that, for four centuries, while brief creeds or confessions of the essentials of Christian faith seem to have been in almost or quite universal use in all Churches, no particular form was considered essential or immutable. Some were longer, and some were shorter. At Carthage, for instance, the candidate for Baptism, in answer to the question, "Dost thou believe?" answered simply: "I

believe in God the Father, in His Son Christ (and) in the Holy Ghost; I believe (in) the forgiveness of sins and eternal life through the holy Church." In Western Churches, the baptismal creeds were fuller, and gradually approximated to the form which is now called the Apostles' Creed. In Oriental Churches, if we may at all trust the so-called Apostolical Constitutions, the form of the baptismal creeds must have been fuller than at the West, and must more nearly have resembled that which is now popularly called the Nicene Creed. Here, once more, we find local liberty in matters of form together with substantial unity and consent in all essentials.

I must now ask you to follow me in an examination of one of the most interesting series of events in the history of Christianity. By those events it has commonly been supposed that the former freedom of the Christian Churches was notably abridged; but I hope to show you that, on the contrary, it was solemnly confirmed and resolutely protected as a constitutional and inalienable right; and, as one result of our investigation, I trust that you will clearly see what are the genuine doctrinal essentials of the Christian faith. I shall have no occasion to make any assertion that will be disputed by any competent scholar; and if I am so fortunate as to make my statement of the facts sufficiently simple, I believe that the inferences and conclusions to be drawn from them will require no argument.

The unity of consent in all matters of importance which prevailed throughout the Christian Church of the first three centuries was maintained, by the simple and reasonable

method of frequent consultation. Whenever any question of difficulty arose, the parties immediately interested conferred together, and if the matter was of general concern, they communicated their conclusion to neighboring Churches. In cases of peculiar difficulty advice was sought from other Churches until a satisfactory solution was reached. So universal and so strong was the social bond which united the primitive Churches, so intimate was their knowledge of each others' affairs, and so closely were the decisions of local Churches observed and followed by other local Churches, that a fairly complete code of canons had come into existence, and had been generally accepted, before a single General Council of all the Churches of Christendom had ever been practically thought of. When questions of faith arose, as they did too often arise, they were always decided in the same way. Most of the proposed doctrines were mere innovations, which the common sense of all the Churches rejected; and in that case the innovators either submitted to the common judgment or withdrew from the common assembly of the faithful. Sometimes the innovators obstinately denied some article of the faith and were thereupon expelled from the Church. When differences arose on matters of discipline between brethren who were one in faith, other Churches were consulted, and the common judgment was decisive. Everywhere the rule was the same: a man who held the common faith and remained in communion with the universal body of the faithful was everywhere recognized as a member of the one universal or catholic Church; all who departed from the universal faith, who

rejected the discipline which the universal judgment approved, or who withdrew from the communion of other Christians, thereby cut themselves off from the Catholic Church.

At first there were no appointed times nor prescribed districts within which the Bishops of adjacent local Churches were expected or required to meet together for consultation. Soon, however, these matters of orderly procedure were arranged. Two of the oldest canons in existence direct that the Bishops of every "nation" are to have a chief of their own order with whom they are to act on all occasions, and that their regular meetings for business are to be held shortly after Easter and again in the month of October every year. For a long time the Roman provinces generally coincided with the nations conquered by the Roman arms; but when those national provinces were divided into smaller provinces, as they frequently were, the Church arrangements followed the new order. Thus provincial councils gradually took the place of national councils; but no Ecumenical or General Council of the whole Christian Church was ever proposed, or was ever possible, until after the battle of Adrianople in 323 when Constantine the Great, who had become Emperor of the West in 312, defeated the persecuting tyrant Licinius, and so became the undisputed master of the whole Roman Empire. Several years before this event bitter controversies which had arisen in Alexandria in connection with the new doctrines of Arius had been spreading elsewhere. For the first time in its history the Christian Church was threatened with general and

chronic discord; and then, as on all lesser occasions, consultation became necessary in order that the common judgment of the Church might be ascertained and delivered. In 325 the great Council of Nicæa was assembled by command of Constantine. It consisted of three hundred and eighteen representatives of the Churches of Christendom, from Britain to the furthest East, many of whom still bore in their bodies scars and mutilations which certified their fidelity to the Christian faith in times of savage persecution. The Council of Nicæa was the first representative imperial parliament that the world had ever seen. Every member of it had been chosen to his office by the suffrage of the Christian community over which he presided; every one of them was a sworn maintainer of the constitution of the Christian Church; and they were called together to consult for the well-being of the Christian Commonwealth throughout the Roman Empire, that is, throughout the civilized world.

Now, observe that they were not there to proclaim a new doctrine, but to give their testimony on these two questions of fact:—first, whether the doctrine of Arius was, or was not, the doctrine they themselves had received as the doctrine of Christianity; and second, whether it was consistent with the doctrine they had received. On the first of these questions the testimony was unanimous. No one, even on the Arian side, pretended that the doctrine of Arius had been explicitly delivered to the Church by Christ or His Apostles. It was admitted to be a novelty; the argument in its favor was purely philosophical; and consequently, the true question before the council was whether

the new philosophical doctrine of Arius was consistent with the established and universal doctrine of the Church. The testimony of an immense majority of the Bishops was to the contrary. A brief Declaration of certain articles of the universal Christian Faith was prepared and published in the name of the Council; and, appended to that Declaration, was a formal condemnation of the Arian doctrines which the Council pronounced to be inconsistent with the Christian Faith. The Nicene Declaration and its appended Judgment were as follows :

"We believe in one God, the Father, Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible:

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Begotten of the Father, Only Begotten, that is, of the substance of the Father; God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father; By Whom all things were made, both those in heaven and those in earth; Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down, and was incarnate, and was made Man, suffered, and rose again the third day, ascended into heaven and cometh again to judge the quick and the dead:

"And in the Holy Ghost.

"But them that say that there was (a time) when He was not; and that before He was begotten He was not; and that He was made of things which are not; or who say that the Son of God is of a different substance or essence; or that He is subject to conversion or mutation; these the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes."

In connection with this Solemn Declaration and Judgment we must make three weighty observations.

The first is that it was made reluctantly. If we inspect it, we find that it declares the faith of the members of the Council concerning only two of the three articles of the formula of Baptism, "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Of the Father it says only enough to deny with emphasis the opinion of certain heretics who imagined that God is not the maker of the visible creation as well as of the invisible world of spirits. Of the Son it speaks more fully, so as to show the positive belief with which the heresy of Arius was inconsistent. Of the Holy Ghost it says not one word beyond an acknowledgment of its Being. After that, the phrases in which the false doctrine of Arius was expressed, are solemnly condemned as manifestly inconsistent with the Christian Faith. With that condemnation the Council stopped. It had done the duty to which Divine Providence had called it, and having faithfully done that duty, it did no more. Very clearly the fathers of Nicæa were not anxious to engage in extensive definitions of doctrine. Even in doing what they did, they acted reluctantly. As in the first Council at Jerusalem, there was "much disputing" among them. Some were utterly opposed to defining anything whatever; others strongly objected to the crucial phrase "of one substance with the Father," and all of those who objected to it were not by any means disciples of Arius. That identical phrase had been used some time before to express a view of the relation of the Father and the Son which was

as erroneous in one way as the doctrine of Arius was in another, and its introduction was therefore extremely distasteful to many thoroughly faithful men. Still, after full discussion, it was agreed that the language of the Declaration, in the sense in which it was used by the Council, did fairly and faithfully express the common faith of all the Churches of Christ, and that the doctrine of Arius, being inconsistent with that common faith, must be condemned.

We must next observe that nobody supposed the Declaration to be infallibly true, merely because a great and venerable Ecumenical Council had adopted it. The superstitious notion that Councils of the Church—even Ecumenical Councils—are infallible, had not then been thought of. Even in the Council of Nicæa there were men who did little honor to their office. There were trimmers who were ready to take either side, if it seemed more likely than the other to promote their profit or advancement. There were unscrupulous politicians whose views of theology were reflections of the views of the imperial court, and not of the true faith of their respective Churches. There were timid men, and there were "moderate" men, with a constitutional inclination to compromise, even in cases in which the pretence of compromise only covers a surrender. There were men, too, who honestly feared that the new declaration, and especially its crucial phrase, would give great and just offence. And then, among the most heroic of the Bishops present, there were some who had no more notion of the meaning of the phrase "of one substance with Father" than the majority—I speak with all

due respect—of those whom I am new addressing. How should the decision of such a matter by such an assembly be regarded as infallibly true? Nobody in those days pretended that it was infallibly true. How then was its truth to be tested?

In the old way, which was also the simplest way in the world, namely by the general judgment of the Churches of Christ all the world over. But let us distinguish. Rightly stated, the question to be decided by all the Churches was not whether the Nicene Declaration was true, but whether it was Christian; that is to say, whether it did really and truly set forth the faith which all Christian Churches had received at the beginning and had held from the beginning. To that question the answer was unequivocal. No sooner was the Nicene Declaration published than with one consent all Christian Churches throughout the world bore witness that in all the particulars to which it referred, it was a true statement of the Christian faith as they had received it and held it from the beginning. The Arians themselves did not attempt to contradict the universal testimony, but in subsequent controversies professed the utmost veneration for the Nicene Council and entire submission to the Nicene Declaration.

This they were the more able to do because, as we have now, in the third place to observe, the Nicene Declaration was not a Creed. It was simply a statement of certain truths and a condemnation of certain falsehoods. It was not set forth as a substitute for any of the baptismal creeds which were in use in different Churches. It was not

ordered to be used in any part of public worship. The Nicene fathers did not wish to mortify the Arians, but to win them to the truth, nor do they seem to have had any confidence in the efficacy of enforced subscriptions to create or maintain purity of doctrine, and therefore their Declaration was not proposed as a verbal formula to be universally subscribed in the very language in which the Council had expressed it. Any man who held the faith in its integrity was still at liberty to express his faith in any words which were consistent with the Solemn Declaration of the Council, approved, as it soon was, by the universal acclamation of the Catholic Church.

I must here suspend our historical investigation in order to resume it in the first part of the next lecture; but before I do so let me remark that in the setting forth of the Nicene Declaration there was no enlargement, nor even development, of the Christian Faith as it had been delivered to the Churches of Christ by the Apostles of Christ. Some of its terms were new; the meaning of those terms was not new; and the new terms had been made necessary only to exclude new forms of error which threatened the old faith.

That there was a development of Christian faith in the members of the apostolic Church I do not at all deny. When our Saviour promised His Disciples that the Holy Spirit should teach them all things and bring to their remembrance all things which He had personally taught them, there must have been some things which they had not yet been taught and other things which they had been taught, but which they had not sufficiently understood and

were therefore likely to forget. In the present lecture we have seen how plainly our Lord had spoken of the catholicity of their apostolic commission, how imperfectly they must have understood that part of His teaching, how completely they forgot it and how gradually they were brought to remember it and to accept the unforeseen consequences which were to attend it. It was only bit by bit, as they were able to bear it, that their Master's teaching was recalled to their remembrance, and that they were guided into new truth which they had been slowly prepared to receive and apply.

The new things which they were to be taught by the promised Spirit were none the less new to the Apostles because they were implied in other things which they had been already taught. When Peter first made his great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," he had little understanding of the deep significance of his own words. In his sermon on the day of Pentecost, and in his brave speech to the people by the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, we find a fuller understanding of the meaning of that confession than he could possibly have had before the resurrection of our Saviour; but when we compare all that he said in those two discourses with the immeasurably larger and more spiritual apprehension of Christ—of the Sinless Sufferer for mankind, of the priestly character of His atonement, of the priestly and princely dignity of His people, and of the privilege of partaking in His sufferings, which is a sure pledge of the partaking of His glory—all of which and more we find in Peter's First Epistle, welling out of the rich maturity of his later life, it is impossible not to

see how many things this Prince of the Apostles had been taught by the Spirit of Christ during the years which had intervened.

We often hear men say, Give us the Christianity of Christ! It is a most just demand. It represents a lawful and laudable resentment at the endless additions to the Christianity of Christ by which the Gospel has been obscured and Christ Himself has been hidden behind a mass of vain inventions. By all means let us have the Christianity of Christ, and nothing else than that. But let us have the whole of it! Let us have all that the Apostles remembered and the Evangelists recorded; and then let us have the deep meaning of it all, the fulness of the truth of it, which the Holy Spirit revealed to them. There is a true and scriptural theory, as well as a false and sophistical theory, of the development of Christian doctrine. The latter is purely individual and sectarian, and would justify any development which the misdirected energy of self-will might happen to construct; the former is catholic, and justifies only that development which is proved to have been natural and normal by the simple fact that it was universal. When one recollects these facts;—that the Apostles by whom the faith was propagated were scattered far asunder to the very ends of the civilized world and even among the barbarians; that many of the Churches which they planted had no communication with each other for more than two hundred and fifty years; that within two years after it was made physically and politically possible for their representatives to meet together, they did meet in council to declare

their several versions of their common faith; and that those versions, separately received and separately preserved in communities of men differing in race, in language, in tradition, in custom and in civilization, were found to be in all essential points identical;—when one remembers these things, he must first be struck, I think, with the social instinct and sense of unity which brought such men together, and then with the impossibility that their common tradition should have been derived from any other than one common source. Whatever development of thought we may imagine we discover in their phraseology is more apparent than real. It is only the development of the implicit into the explicit, the universal and necessary growth of one and the self-same fulness of truth into one and the self-same fitness of form. Its necessity is demonstrated by its universality. Like springs from like, and it grows to like. "Men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles." The Christianity which had been separately received, which for centuries had been separately held, and which was then set forth with one consent by all Churches throughout the world, can have been none other than the Christianity which was everywhere delivered by Christ's Apostles; and the Christianity of the Apostles was the Christianity of Christ.

LECTURE III.

THE CHALCEDONIAN DECREE.

LECTURE III.

THE CHALCEDONIAN DECREE.

THE NICENE CREED FIRST SET FORTH AS A SUFFICIENT AND UNALTERABLE FORMULA OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH BY THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON. ITS UNIVERSAL OBLIGATION. ITS GUARANTEE OF DOCTRINAL LIBERTY. IT SETS THE LIMITS OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS. IT EXCLUDES THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE OR VERACIOUS CRITICISM.

The faith which was once delivered to the saints.—JUDE 3.

The Creed represents the Catholic judgment.—REV. CHARLES GORE.

The best minds of the future are to be neither religious minds defying scientific advances nor scientific minds denying religion, but minds in which religion interprets and is interpreted by science, in which faith and inquiry subsist together and reinforce one another.—IBID.

Religion claims as its own the new light which metaphysics and science in our day are throwing upon the immanence of God; it protests only against those imperfect, because premature, syntheses which, in the interests of abstract speculation, would destroy religion.—AUBREY MORE.

This much I may say, that after a life, already not a short one, spent in the study of science and philosophical divinity, and living in equal intimacy with men of science and with thoughtful divines, I have learned nothing which can reasonably disturb an impartial mind, either in its conviction of the truths of Christianity, as interpreted by the more moderate sections of the Christian Church, or in its acceptance of the divine inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, not indeed as literal or punctual, but as generic and substantial. I am equally assured that the general development of human knowledge is friendly to these considerations.—PROF. PRITCHARD.

Whatever meanings different theologians may attach to supernatural religion, history teaches us that nothing is so natural as the supernatural.—MAX MULLER.

The theory of evolution is quite compatible with the belief in God.—CHARLES DARWIN.

I cannot for a moment admit that the theory of evolution will alter our theological views.—PROFESSOR JEVONS.

The doctrine of evolution leaves the argument for an intelligent Creator and Governor of the world stronger than before.—BISHOP TEMPLE.

Those who hoped that molecular science would help them to get rid of God have obviously made a profound mistake. It has already shown far more clearly than ever was or could have been anticipated, that every atom of matter points back beyond itself to the all-originating will of God.—PROFESSOR FLINT.

So keenly were the Christians of the early period conscious of the one life of nature as the evidence of the Spirit, that it was a point of the charge against Origen that his language seemed to involve an exclusion of the Holy Spirit from nature, and a limitation of His activity to the Church.—REV. CHARLES GORE.

In humanity made after the Divine Image, it was the original intention of God that the Spirit should find His chiefest joy.—IBID.

The belief in the Holy Scriptures as inspired requires to be held in context by the belief in the general action of the Holy Spirit upon the Christian Society and the individual soul. It is, we may perhaps say, becoming more and more difficult to believe in the Bible without believing in the Church. . . . . The apostolic writings were written as occasion required, within the Church and for the Church. They presuppose membership in it and familiarity with its tradition. They are secondary, not primary, instructors; for edification, not for initiation. Nor, in fact, can a hard and fast line be drawn between what lies within and what lies without the canon.—IBID.

We cannot make any exact claim upon any one's belief in regard to Inspiration, simply because we have no authoritative definition to bring to bear upon him. Those of us who believe most in the inspiration of the Church will see a divine purpose in this absence of dogma, because we shall perceive that only now is the state of knowledge such as admits of the question being legitimately raised.—IBID.

If the Christian Church has been able to defeat the critical attack, so far as it threatened destruction to the historical basis of the New Testa-

ment, it has not been by foreclosing the question with an appeal to dogma, but by facing in fair and frank discussion the problems raised. A similar treatment of Old Testament problems will enable us to distinguish between what is reasonable and reverent, and what is high-handed and irreligious in contemporary criticism, whether German, French or English.—IBID.

IT is one of the horrors of religious controversy that it casts out charity. Controversy is oftener waged for the glory of victory than for the glory of God; and when victory becomes the chief aim of the combatants, the charity which thinketh no evil is forgotten, because it is necessary to think evil and to say evil in order to discredit the adversary. Nay, the tactics of controversy are plied to catch the adversary in some false position, and even to drive him as far as possible from the truth in order to prove how wrong he is. For the most part what is called Christian controversy is egregiously misnamed, because, whatever else it may be, it is anything rather than Christian. It is nearly always un-Christian; it is often anti-Christian; it is sometimes diabolical. What it is now it was in the days of the Apostles of Christ, and such it was in the Nicene period. At the Council of Nicæa, great and venerable as it was, there was much controversy, and not a little of the un-Christian spirit of controversy. It cannot be said that the catholics were all right and the heretics all wrong. As it often happens in such affairs, not a few men got on the side to which they did not properly belong. There were some who sincerely held the catholic faith and yet were forced at one time or another, and in one way or another, into an apparent support of the partisans of Arius; and there were some who figured as champions of

orthodoxy who were in fact nearly or quite as far wrong in one direction as Arius was in the other. The Church of England is largely justified in holding that General Councils, "forasmuch as they be assemblies of men, whereof all be not governed by the Spirit of God, may err, and sometimes have erred." The late Dean Church has admirably said that "in the early and undivided church there was such a thing as authority, and there was no such thing known as infallibility." Hence it was not in the final agreement of a large majority of the Council of Nicæa (as though that agreement must needs have been infallible,) but in the authoritative verdict of the universal Church, that the Declaration of Nicæa found its true sanction, and the sufficient testimony that its contents were agreeable to the Word of God as received and held by all the Churches of Christ. After that for a time, there was peace. Those who had been right from the beginning and those who had been really right in their intentions but who had been betrayed into a false position at some part of the proceedings, adhered to the Nicene Declaration; those who had been really wrong concealed their opposition under a pretence of acquiescence. Very soon the defeated Arians began to assail the faith by indirection. The unrestrained liberty which still allowed every Christian Church and indeed every Christian teacher to frame statements of Christian doctrine, provided only that they should not contradict the Declaration of Nicæa, was unscrupulously used. The secret favorers of Arianism, while professing entire submission to the Nicene Declaration, introduced forms of expression which were really contra-

dictory of it, and so, in various places, insidiously planted heresy, while professing to be champions of catholic truth.

Within a few years after the close of the Nicene Council false charges were trumped up against Athanasius, the champion of the faith; and although they were completely disproved in a council held at Tyre, A. D. 335, the Arian sympathizers, finding themselves, to their surprise, in a majority, deposed him from his archbishopric, and banished him from his see. Six years later, the dedication of a great Church at Antioch was made the occasion of holding another council of one hundred Bishops, and again the Arian sentiment predominated. The council professed the utmost reverence for "the holy and great Synod" of Nicæa; but they soon showed that their object was to gain authority among catholics by pretending to be catholics in the fullest sense of the word. They set forth more than one Declaration of Faith in terms of their own choosing, and their language was so carefully chosen to avoid offence to catholics that one of their Declarations was confessed to be susceptible of an orthodox interpretation. Their true animus, however, was exhibited by the adoption of two canons, in themselves unobjectionable, but the first of which had all the effect of a new decree of deposition against Athanasius, while the second amounted to a prohibition of his restoration, since it virtually forbade the rehearing of his cause before a higher and more competent tribunal than the Synod of Tyre had been. On the whole, the action of the Council of Antioch was so adroit that, although the

disloyalty of its purpose was perfectly well understood, it could not be set aside.

The Arians began again to take courage, and while the objectionable phrases of Arius concerning the Person of Christ were studiously avoided, similar language began to be used concerning the Holy Spirit. Other forms of error likewise began to prevail throughout the East, and a council of oriental Bishops, one hundred and fifty in number, was assembled at Constantinople, A. D. 389. This council reasserted the Nicene Declaration, emphasizing it by the introduction of a few significant phrases, and adding to it, as a corrective of the Arian denials concerning the Holy Spirit and other recent errors, all the additional matter contained in the Creed which is now commonly called the Nicene.

Again the voice of the Universal Church approved the Declaration of this council, so that although the number of its members was so small, and although there was not one Bishop of the Western Church among them, the Council of Constantinople was forthwith accepted and acknowledged as an Ecumenical Council by the acclamation of the whole Church, Eastern and Western.

Again, too, we must observe that it was not the votes of the one hundred and fifty Bishops of Constantinople, but the universal testimony of the Christian world, which established the fact that the Declaration of those Bishops contained a true statement of the universal Christian Faith concerning the matters of which it spoke.

And again we have to observe that the Declaration of

Constantinople was not a creed imposed upon Christendom. It was not intended as a substitute for the baptismal creeds which were in use in the different Churches. The Council adopted no canon requiring it to be generally subscribed, even in the Churches whose Bishops were present. Afterwards, as before, it was open to Christian people everywhere to profess the Christian Faith in whatever language they found most acceptable to themselves.

But again, as before, those who were inclined to heresies made large use of that liberty, and a new error made its appearance in the heresy attributed to Nestorius.

Accordingly, a third great council was assembled at Ephesus, A. D. 431, at which many Eastern Bishops were in attendance and the Western Churches were represented by delegates from Rome. This was the most stormy of all the Ecumenical Councils. Its judgment of particular cases was the judgment merely of a majority of its members, to which the minority refused to submit. Its doctrinal decisions were likewise rejected by the minority, and when the council broke up in confusion, it seemed as if a permanent schism had been inaugurated. But it was not so. The acts of the council were speedily approved and its judgments sustained by the adhesion of the whole Church; and, after a time of reflection, most of the minority submitted in good faith.

But the Council of Ephesus differed from the previous Councils of Nicæa and Constantinople in this, that it set forth no new Declaration of the Faith. The particular heresy it had to deal with was that of Nestorius, who was

charged with teaching that the "Holy Thing" which was born of the Blessed Virgin, and was called the Son of God, was not God. This was clearly inconsistent with the Nicene Declaration, and no new declaration was needed to expose the inconsistency. On the contrary, if any new declaration had been set forth, the Nestorians might have pretended that the Council, and not they, had introduced an innovation.

In dealing with the Nestorian heresy the Council had found the Nicene Declaration to be a touchstone of error in the matters of which it treats. It was high time that it should be recognized as such. The liberty of making formulas of faith had been tremendously abused and required to be restrained. It was absurd that the meeting of an Ecumenical Council should be necessary whenever some presumptuous priest or bishop took it upon him to reconstruct the Christian religion. Therefore the Council of Ephesus formally declared that it was both the right and the duty of local authorities to assume jurisdiction and to pronounce judgment in such cases. After the Nicene Declaration had been solemnly read in open Council, the following Resolution, as we should call it, was adopted, and is now known as the Seventh Canon of Ephesus:

"These things having been read, the Holy Synod decrees that it is unlawful for any man to produce, or to compile, or to compose a different Faith, contrary to that established by the holy and blessed Fathers assembled, with the Holy Ghost, in Nicæa.

"But those who shall presume to compose or to produce

or offer a different Faith to persons desiring to turn to the acknowledgment of the truth, whether from Heathenism or from Judaism, or from any heresy whatsoever, shall be deposed, if they be Bishops or Clergymen; Bishops from the Episcopate and Clergymen from the Clergy; and if they be laymen, they shall be anathematized."

The Seventh Canon of Ephesus is generally but erroneously supposed to have set forth the Nicene Declaration as a creed in the strict sense of the word, but, as a creed, we have clearly seen that the Nicene Declaration would have been defective in several important particulars; and if the Fathers of Ephesus had intended to establish a creed for universal use, they would hardly have forgotten the Declaration of Constantinople, which would have perfectly answered that end. In what they did they followed the invariable example of their predecessors. They went no further than the matters before them required that they should go. In those matters they had found the Nicene Declaration to be sufficient and satisfactory; and they thereupon enacted, first, that it should thenceforward be an ecclesiastical offence to compile or compose any doctrinal statement which should be inconsistent with that Declaration; and second, that to offer or propound any such statement to any person desiring to enter the Christian Church should be punishable with the penalty of deposition. It must be admitted, I think, that the language of the canon is obscure. Closely examined, it seems to have been made up of two originally independent propositions, one of which was probably engrafted on the other as a rider or

amendment; and in a council so stormy, it would be nothing wonderful if such an amendment were to be clumsily joined to the original proposition. This, at all events, is clear, that if the council intended the very language of the Nicene Declaration to be universally obligatory, it did not say so; and it is equally clear that if it intended to make the Nicene Declaration a test of all heresies, it adopted a formula which the Fathers of Constantinople had found to be insufficient to answer that purpose.

Twenty years later the work which was imperfectly done by the Council of Ephesus was unequivocally completed. In 451 the greatest of all the Councils, numbering six hundred and thirty bishops, assembled at Chalcedon for the correction of recently invented forms of heresy; and as the Council of Ephesus had found that the definition of Nicæa, fairly and grammatically construed in its obvious sense, was a sufficient protection against Nestorianism, so the Fathers of Chalcedon found that, in the definitions of Nicæa and Constantinople united, the Church had a sufficient protection against all heresies whatsoever. It was now a hundred and twenty-six years since the Council of Nicæa had assembled, and nearly four hundred and twenty years since the Apostles had received their commission to go and teach all nations. In all that time the Catholic Church had never but twice, and then with great reluctance, exercised its supreme function of exact doctrinal definition. Heretics, on the contrary, had been ever ready with irreverent self-conceit to affirm or deny, as the whim took them; and the absence of a fixed formula or symbol of faith had been severe-

ly felt. For want of it, faithful members of the Church had been liable to be led away by heretics who professed the greatest devotion to orthodoxy and the utmost reverence for the Councils of the Church, but who availed themselves of the unrestrained liberty of exposition to set forth new formulas which were inconsistent with the faith of the Catholic Church. In like manner heathen persons embracing Christianity, and heretics or schismatics desiring to return into the one fold, were liable to be required by pretentious priests to subscribe to formulas which were not only unauthorized, but which were expressly designed to teach heresy in the Church itself. The necessity of having not only sound and sufficient definitions of the Faith, but also a fixed and unalterable form of words by which to test the soundness of other definitions, had at length become manifest. The Declarations of Nicæa, and Constantinople, were theologically exact in their terms; they had been unequivocally approved by the Christian Churches throughout the whole world; and they had been found to be amply sufficient in their scope to express the Catholic Faith. Therefore the Fathers of Chalcedon, in dealing with the new heresies of their day, imitated the example of the Fathers of Ephesus. They did not adopt or impose new definitions. They tested disputed doctrines by simply comparing them with the definitions of Nicæa and Constantinople. For the protection of the Church in the future they renewed the prohibition of Ephesus, which forbade the setting forth of any doctrinal statement which should be inconsistent with the definitions of Nicæa; they extended that prohibition to state-

ments inconsistent with the definitions of Constantinople; and lastly, they declared that not only the doctrines expressed in those definitions, but the very *ipsissima verba*, the identical words in which they were defined, should be and remain unalterable. The distinction is very clearly brought out in the two words *pistis* and *symbolon; pistis* referring to the doctrine, and *symbolon* to the formula, of the Creed. Repeating the prohibition of Ephesus, the Fathers of Chalcedon declared "that it is not lawful for any man to produce, or compile, or compose, or hold, or teach to others any different faith (*heteran pistin*)," a prohibition which manifestly applied to the substance of the Faith and to all modes of teaching; and then they proceeded furthermore to enact that "those who shall presume EITHER to compose a different faith (*pistin*), OR to publish, or teach, or deliver a different formula (*symbolon*), to persons desirous of turning to the truth from heathenism, or Judaism, or any heresy whatsoever, shall be deposed, if they be bishops or clergymen—bishops from the Episcopate and Clergymen from the Clergy; and, if they be monks or laymen they shall be anathematized."

A few words more will complete our brief historical *excursus*. The Decrees of the Council of Chalcedon were received and approved by the whole Christian world. The Nicene declaration, with the additions made at Constantinople, was acknowledged to be a full and sufficient statement of the Christian Faith, and a touchstone of all heresies, so that any man who assented to that Creed, for it was now emphatically a Creed, could not lawfully be required to

subscribe to any other statement of doctrine, however true it might be, as a condition of communion in any Christian Church on earth. Such was the unanimous judgment and decree of the whole Christian Commonwealth.

From that auspicious day to this, the Chalcedonian Decree has been neither repealed nor amended. After the great Council of Chalcedon only two councils of an undisputed ecumenical character were ever held, the Second and Third Councils of Constantinople. In both of them serious errors of doctrine were examined and condemmed, but in neither of them was it necessary to set forth any new definitions of doctrine, because it was found that when the errors in question were submitted to the test of the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed, they were so clearly inconsistent with it that not to have condemmed them would have been to renounce the Nicene Faith.

Since the Third Council of Constantinople no Church Council, calling itself ecumenical, has really been so. There have been General Councils of the Eastern Churches, and of the Western Churches; but not one of them has been ecumenical; and the decisions of none of them have been approved by universal Christendom. Their doctrinal decrees have been expressions of local opinion; they have been powerless to add one jot to the faith of the Church Catholic. Whenever any of them, in the face of the Decree of Chalcedon, has presumed to make the reception of its doctrinal opinions a condition of Christian communion, it has thereby transgressed a fundamental law of the Christian Commonwealth, and every Bishop, Priest or Deacon will-

ingly consenting to such action has incurred the penalty of deposition from his office.

We must not imagine, however, that the Council of Chalcedon required the Nicene Creed to be substituted for the simpler baptismal creeds which were used in different Churches. It was neither to be expected nor to be desired that children, peasants and other illiterate persons, that is to say, a vast majority of mankind, should be vexed with the subtleties of theological distinctions. It was wholly unnecessary that they should be taught the differences between *homo-ousios* and *homoi-ousios*. Therefore the old provincial formulas continued, at least in the Western Churches, to be as freely used as they had been before. So long as Christian people could declare that they sincerely believed those formulas, they were just as much Christian people as they would have been if they had lived before the Council of Nicæa was held. But whenever they were tempted to refine upon the faith they had professed at baptism, and especially when they were eager to tell what they did *not* believe, the Nicene Creed was there to test whether their opinions did or not accord with the unanimous judgment of the Christian Church. If their opinions agreed with the Nicene Creed, they were Christian opinions; and whether they were true or false, or wise or foolish, if they were not contradictory of the Nicene Creed, they might be lawfully held by Christian people without prejudice to their Christianity.

I submit to you, then, that in the Creed commonly called the Nicene we have a sufficient statement of the doctrinal

part of the Christian religion, set forth as such by lawful representatives of the whole Christian Commonwealth; acclaimed as such by the universal Christian Church; never repealed by any world-wide Christian assembly; and now professed by nineteen-twentieths of all who call themselves Christians.

Those who explicitly hold the Apostles' Creed, without denying any part of the Nicene Creed—which is the precise position of most Christian lay-people—do implicitly hold the Nicene doctrine, and to-day, in spite of all divisions, the Church of Rome, the Anglican Churches, the Oriental Churches, and all the greater Protestant denominations, such as the Lutherans, the Presbyterians, and the Methodists, maintain the Nicene Creed itself. Nay more, even bodies of Christians who imagine that their Christian liberty would be endangered by a formal admission of written creeds, do in fact hold the faith of universal Christendom as it is summarily contained in the Apostles' Creed, and they hold it in the very sense in which it is more precisely expressed in the Nicene Creed. In other words, notwithstanding all existing divisions, universal Christendom, virtually with one accord, still maintains the Christian Faith, as it was set forth at Nicæa, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon. Moreover, the universal Christian world agrees in nothing else. Every Church, at one time or another, has attempted some improvement on the One Faith of the Church Catholic, and every time when any Church has done so has been a time, and the beginning of a time, of fresh discords and of new divisions. Only in the One

Faith has any sort of unity been maintained; and by the One Faith, I think that our historical *excursus* justifies us in understanding that which is set forth in the Creed commonly called the Nicene.

That, at least, is the unequivocal position of the Church to which we belong. The Bishops of the American Church in 1887 set forth a Declaration concerning the conditions of a restoration of visible Christian Unity in which they mentioned as one of the indispensable points, "the Nicene Creed, as a sufficient statement of Christian doctrine." In 1888 the Bishops of the Anglican Churches all the world over assembled at Lambeth, and endorsed the previous Declaration of the American Bishops. So far, therefore, as we are concerned, our Church stands firmly by the Church of the first centuries. Her Christianity is the Christianity of Chalcedon, not one jot less, and not a single jot more.

So far as doctrine goes, we are therefore entitled to say that the only Christianity in behalf of which we are bound to find sufficient evidence is the Christianity of the Nicene Creed. Let those who care to do so trouble themselves to prove the hundreds of pious, non-pious and impious opinions with which the Christianity of Christ and His Apostles has too often been overloaded and almost submerged. We are content to stand by that statement of its truths which the universal voice of Christian men and Christian Churches has accepted in every age and every land as the Christian Faith which was once delivered to the saints. To show the truth of that statement is to prove the truth of Christianity, because, if that is true, Christianity is true, while the volu-

minous theological *aberglaube* of sects and doctors has often so obscured, defaced and deformed the truth of Christ that one might justly set it down as an invention of the Enemy of Souls to make the truth itself incredible.

Allow me now briefly to state the results, as I conceive them, of our examination of historical facts.

We have seen how the Providence of God guided the Universal Church of the early ages, step by step, in successive measures for the defence of the Christian Faith. We have seen that, at every step, it was not by the personal authority even of the Apostles, nor by the arguments of Doctors, nor by arbitrary decrees of Councils, that the Christianity or non-Christianity of new doctrines was decided, but by the morally unanimous judgment of the universal Church of Christ, to which the guidance of the Spirit of Christ was promised. We have seen the extreme reluctance with which Councils of the Church were constrained to compose formal definitions of faith. We have seen how slow they were to set forth such definitions as verbally obligatory creeds, even when necessity required them to be set forth as declarations of Christian truth. We have seen that the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Symbol, commonly called the Nicene Creed, was at last established at the Council of Chalcedon, not to supersede the customary baptismal creeds of local Churches, but as a bulwark against heresies. We have seen that it was then set forth, with the moral consent of all Christendom, both as a sufficient statement of Christian Doctrine and as a constitutional law of Christian liberty, so that opinions which are not in conflict with it may be freely held without prejudice

to the Christianity of him who holds them. We have seen that it was then declared to be a high crime and misdemeanor, punishable with deposition and excommunication, to demand of any man, as a condition of Christian communion, that he should receive or believe anything not contained in that symbol. We have seen that no consentient action of the Christian Church has ever repealed that unanimous decree, which is consequently still binding in every part of the universal Church. We have seen that, as a matter of fact, the truths expressed in that symbol are still held, explicitly or implicitly, by an immense majority of all who profess and call themselves Christians, however separated from each other in other respects. Finally, we have seen that the separated bodies of Christians who are one in that faith, are at one in hardly anything else. Having seen these things, we are at liberty to join in the acclamation which was raised in the Council of Chalcedon at the adoption of the Chalcedonian Decree. The Acts of the Council record that after it had been read, the assembled Bishops cried out: "This is the Faith of the Fathers. This is the Faith of the Apostles. By this we all stand. This we all believe."

Assuming, then, that the Nicene Creed is a sufficient statement, and the only indisputably authorized statement, of the Christian Faith, that is, of the Christian religion on its doctrinal side, it clearly follows that the Nicene Creed sets the limit of Christian apologetics. Whatever is not contained, explicitly or implicitly, in that creed may be true and edifying; but the verity of the Christian religion is not

in the least bound up with it. Hence it is of the utmost importance carefully to scrutinize the Nicene Creed and to see whether it does, or does not sanction several doctrinal theories or opinions which are popularly supposed to be essential to the Christian Faith, but which are really no part of Christianity. If there are such doctrines, the result of our scrutiny will be to discriminate the Christian Faith in its integrity at once from pious and edifying doctrines which may lawfully be held by Christian people whose great privilege it may be to have learned them, but which are not essential to a genuine Christianity, and also, perhaps, from certain other opinions which are held, undoubtedly, by many Christian people, but only to the detriment, though not to the destruction, of their Christianity.

Beginning, then, at the beginning of the Nicene Creed, we find that in its very first clause it delivers us from a thousand imaginary difficulties of the present time by excluding the whole ground of a controversy which ought never to have been begun; I mean the so-called conflict between science and religion. Science investigates the operations of nature which religion maintains to be the work—and possibly more than the mere work—of God. How God has made nature, the Christian religion, as it is stated in the Nicene Creed, does not pretend to tell; and there is nothing in the investigations of science which so much as touches the utmost verge of the sublime affirmation that "God the Father Almighty" is the "Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." The one statement supplements the other; that is all. Science

has never proved, and never can prove, that nature is not the work of God. On that subject conflict between science and religion is impossible. Scientific men may indeed be atheists; but atheism is not science. Atheism is a negation which can never be proved, and which every successive discovery of science shows to be less and less probable.

It is concerning the method of creation, rather than the fact of creation, that science and religion are supposed to be in conflict with each other. Scientific men, with almost absolute unanimity, have accepted the theory of evolution, and, for my part, though I must insist on remembering that the evolution theory is to this hour nothing more than an unverified theory, I find no insurmountable religious difficulty to attend that theory. Certainly there is nothing in it to contradict the Nicene Creed. Mr. Spencer defines the process of evolution as follows: "Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent homogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation." Now, I do not pretend to understand that definition as well as I should like to understand it; but we may understand from it, at least, that evolution, since it is a process, must have had a beginning. We may further understand that before the process of evolution began there existed an undifferentiated chaos in which everything was like every thing else, and nothing was related to anything else; nothing had any properties or qualities by which it could be distinguished from another thing, or by which it could attract, or repel, or

otherwise affect another thing. In such a chaos there can have been no motion, because the presence of motion would have created changes of relation, and would consequently have begun a process of differentiation and integration. If, therefore, we have now a world in which the originally dead homogeneity of chaos has given place to a universe of heterogeneous individualities which are reciprocally related to each other, it is because of the introduction of motion; and the introduction of motion implies the introduction of yet another factor. That factor is force, without which it is impossible to conceive of the beginning of any motion whatever. Thus the very statement of the theory of evolution concedes, or rather asserts, the existence of an originally undifferentiated and motionless chaos, from which the present universe has been evolved by the operation of a force or forces which cannot have been originally present in it.

But when the evolutionist investigates the forces of the universe, as they now exist and operate in nature, he finds that they all appear to be forms of one single, subtle force which eludes his search, and which, when it seems to have been destroyed, has only changed its form and mode of operation. Thus he is brought at length to admire what he calls "the persistence of force," by which, says Mr. Spencer, "we really mean the persistence of some power which transcends our knowledge and conception. The manifestations of force (he continues) occurring either in ourselves or outside of ourselves do not persist; but that which does persist is the unknown cause of these manifestations. In other words, asserting the persistence of force is but another mode

of asserting an unconditioned reality without beginning or end."

Now, against all this the Nicene Creed has little to say. The difference between the evolutionist and the Nicene Creed is: First, That the evolutionist, as such, assumes, but does not account for, the existence of an original undifferentiated chaos, while the Nicene Creed, without joining in that questionable assumption, does account even for such a chaos, if it ever did exist; second, that the evolutionist, as such, has no name for the unconditioned and eternal Power from which all forces proceed, while the Nicene Creed gives it the name of God; third, that the evolutionist calls the change from an undifferentiated chaos to an orderly universe a process, while the Nicene Creed calls it a making or creation; and fourth, that the evolutionist has a theory of the creative process, while the Nicene Creed has none. Between the evolutionist and the Nicene Christian there is no irreconcilable conflict, nor any conflict at all. If an evolutionist does not deny that the uncreated and eternal Reality, by which the substance as well as the forces of nature consist, is God, his theory of evolution will work no prejudice to the Christian faith, which neither affirms nor denies any theory whatever of the method of creation.

I have chosen to refer thus fully to the theory of evolution, because it is the only scientific theory with which any statement of the Nicene Creed could by any possibility be supposed to conflict, and when we discover that there is no necessary conflict between them, we must surely conclude that any and every conflict between science and Nicene

Christianity is as unnecessary as it is unnatural. If scientific men have been too ready to assume that their discoveries are fatal to Christianity, we can only say that the only summary statement of Christianity which has any claim to be universally authoritative does not justify that assumption; and, on the other hand, if too many impetuous Christians have been equally swift, or perhaps more swift, to declare that scientific discoveries are subversive of Christianity, we have again to say that the admission may be true of their personal or sectarian versions of Christianity, but that it is absolutely untrue of the Christianity of the Nicene Creed. A conflict between science and sectarianism is always possible; a conflict between science and genuine Catholic Christianity is not possible, because the Nicene Creed makes no affirmation of any kind, with which any discovery of physical science has been, or ever can be, inconsistent.

It does not follow, however, that physical science and the Christian religion have nothing to do with each other. Science as well as religion is occupied with "invisible things of God," which are "clearly seen" in the sensible phenomena of nature; and, therefore, a reverent and veracious study of nature must, in the end, be serviceable to religion. I hold it, for example, to be no light matter that a scientific evolutionist like Mr. Spencer indignantly repudiates the gross materialism of which he has so frequently been claimed as an adherent. I count it for much in the religious education of the world that such a man as he declares that the investigation of physical nature by a rigid scientific method proves the universal presence of an uncreated and eternal

Power to be "the most certain of all things." I am not discouraged when I observe that he does not profess to find in nature a sufficient proof of the "Godhead" of the Inscrutable Power which nature manifests, because religion does not say that Godhead is revealed in nature, and an inspired religious sage mournfully asks: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is high as heaven—what canst thou do? It is deeper than hell—what canst thou know?" Yet I confess that I am strengthened to find that Mr. Spencer does implicitly maintain what St. Paul maintains, that is, the *divinity* of the Inscrutable Power which is manifested in nature; for what else than divine can that power be which contains within itself the potentiality of all Powers and forces, physical, intellectual, social and moral, and which is so transcendently exalted above humanity as to be beyond the reach alike of human scrutiny and of human understanding? Thus, true science, and just so far as it is true science, comes in aid of faith; nay, it is itself a way to faith. True science is simply the result of a carefully exact reading of God's book of nature, followed by a carefully methodical arrangement of the revelations which are found there; and how far the investigations of science may be destined hereafter to confirm religion, no man can foretell. There is profound truth in these lines of the prophetic poet of our time:

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;—
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,

Little flower:—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God is and man is!"

The time limitations within which I must confine these remarks forbid me to say more of the relations of science and religion than to repeat with emphasis that these two departments of divine knowledge can never rightly come into antagonism; and that with Christianity, as defined in the Nicene Creed, neither physical science, nor, I will add, intellectual science, can come into any antagonism which is not purely gratuitous; since Christianity, so defined, says just as little of any matter of physical or intellectual science as of mathematics or philology.

I come now to the innumerable difficulties which have attended recent studies and investigations in Biblical Criticism; and here, at the very outset, I must ask you not to misunderstand me. I do not profess to be a competent critic of the Holy Scriptures. I do not profess, therefore, to be a competent critic of the critics. I confess that I have been led to believe that what are called—somewhat prematurely, perhaps—the results of modern criticism, are partly true. I am prepared to admit, for instance, that the Pentateuch is a composite work of various origin and that it was not all, nor nearly all, written, nor even compiled, by Moses. I am prepared to admit that there were probably two Isaiahs, and not only one. I am prepared to admit that the closing verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark are a late addition to the original Gospel. I am pre-

pared to admit that passages, such as that which contains the beautiful story of the woman taken in adultery, may have been interpolated in other Gospels. I am very sure that I John v. 7, is a scandalous interpolation. On the other hand, there are very many things of which I am by no means so sure as the critics profess to be, and I have seen reason to change my opinion of some things in which I formerly followed then. For example, at one time, and for a long time, I believed the Johannean authorship of the Fourth Gospel to be a great deal worse than doubtful; whereas, after a careful perusal of Dr. Watson's noble Bampton Lectures on that subject, I am now fully persuaded that the authorship of the Fourth Gospel is as certain as that of any of the others. These remarks will suffice, I trust, to show that, while I am not eager to adopt rash conclusions concerning the Scriptures, I am not prepared to reject conclusions in which competent scholars are agreed, though they may not accord with the traditional opinions in which I was brought up. Most assuredly I do not defend the presumptuous "free handling" of the Bible by which some men, who are anything but competent critics, have secured to themselves a brief and unenviable notoriety; but neither have I any admiration of the timidity which shrinks from getting at the truth of the Bible, whatever it may be. For my part, I want nothing else than the truth about it. The clearer that truth is made, the better we shall understand the Bible, and the more we shall profit by it. Hence I am not indifferent to the course of critical inquiry. I am deeply and intensely interested in it—

far more deeply and intensely than in any investigations of physical science, because the subject of it is of such unspeakably sacred importance. But I am utterly and absolutely indifferent to the results to which veracious criticism may lead, provided only that the criticism be so thorough and so veracious that the results, when reached, may be trustworthy. Whatever those results shall be, I have not the slightest fear of them, because, if all the most destructive results of biblical criticism were to be proved beyond dispute, the Christian religion, as defined in the Nicene Creed, would remain not only unscathed but untouched. That is the point to which I wish now to call your attention.

I do not wonder at the consternation with which the slightest assured results of biblical criticism have been received by Christian people who have been trained to believe in the extreme rabbinical theory of the verbal inspiration of the whole Bible in all its parts. That theory has no warrant in the Scripture itself; it was never formulated by the Catholic Church; it was not known to the Fathers of the Church; it was repudiated by the schoolmen of the middle ages; it was not set forth by any reformed Church in the sixteenth century; the discoveries of science have proved it to be untenable; textual criticism has shivered it to atoms; the higher criticism treats it with just disdain. The misfortune is that many Christian people have been educated to believe that the truth of Christianity depends upon the truth of that unfounded theory, and when the theory falls, their faith in Christianity falls with it. The case of Bishop

Colenso is an instructive one. He had been brought up to believe the theory of verbal inspiration. It seems never to have occurred to him that Christianity could be true if that theory was not true. The questions of "an intelligent Zulu" set him to thinking of certain statements which are contained in the Pentateuch. Being a trained mathematician and in no sense of the word a theologian, he set about an examination of the figures in the Book of Numbers, and was soon convinced that they were hopelessly wrong. Not only did they involve what he considered to be physical impossibilities, but they did not even agree with each other. Then he made calculations of the amount of water that would be required to cover the whole earth to the height of Mount Ararat, and satisfied himself that the story of Noah's flood, as he understood it, was erroneous. But if there was error in the figures of Numbers and error in the history of Genesis, what became of the infallible correctness of the statements of the Bible? If the Bible was not infallibly correct in every particular, what was to become of its (verbal) inspiration? And if the Bible was not (verbally) inspired, what became of Christianity? What did become of all three in Colenso's case was that he threw them all to the winds, and, while holding the office of a Bishop in a Christian Church, he renounced his faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The experience of Colenso has often been repeated. Over and over again persons who have been taught to believe that the truth of Christianity depends upon the verbal inspiration of the Bible have been jeered out of both by such writers as Tom Paine or by peripatetic

lecturers on "the mistakes of Moses," who are themselves victims of that same fatal misapprehension. I can imagine that a sharp investigation of some of those alleged "mistakes" might be a suitable subject for a course of lectures on this foundation, and it would surely end by proving that Moses, or whoever else may have written any part of the Pentateuch, knew more of his subject than any of his critics. That, however, is no part of the present subject. What I have to show is that if all those fearful allegations were true, it would make not one particle of difference to Christianity.

Considering the immense importance which has been attached in recent times to questions of biblical criticism, it is an amazing relief to find how little such questions were regarded in the Primitive Church. The very difficulty of proving the origin of the books of the New Testament from the scattered references to them, and the rather loose quotations from them, which are found in early Christian authors shows how lightly many matters were regarded in those times which are now deemed to be of supreme importance. The whole testimony of antiquity concurs at least in this, that the Books of Holy Scripture were regarded rather as means to faith than as objects of faith. For generations different Churches had different parts of Holy Scripture, while few of them had all; but all of them possessed and held the Christian Faith. We saw in our last lecture that, when catalogues of the Sacred Writings came to be set forth by different Churches, those catalogues were not identical; that no consentient action of the Universal

Church has ever, to this day, settled the canon of Holy Scripture for all Christendom; that the canon of the Roman Church was not finally settled until the sixteenth century; that the canon of the Anglican Church, which was settled a few years later, was not identical with the Roman; and that the canon of the Greek Church differed from both until near the close of the seventeenth century. These facts alone show how completely independent the Christian religion must be of any and every result to which the most searching criticism of the Scriptures can ever lead. A religion which endured the trial of fiery persecution for ages before one single province had determined for itself the number or the names of the Books to be recognized as Holy Scripture, a religion which never to this day has settled that primary question with unanimity, a religion which has never committed itself to any statement of the authorship of those Books nor to any critical account of their contents—such a religion cannot in common reason be held to depend upon the truth or falsehood of any theory of inspiration, and still less can it be overthrown or unsettled by critical discoveries which can contradict absolutely nothing it has ever said. The theory of verbal inspiration, whether it stands or falls, is no part of Christianity; and no real or supposed discoveries of critics concerning the date, or the authorship, or the composition of the Scriptures either does or can conflict with the Christian Faith, as contained in the Nicene Creed, since that creed says not one word on any one of those subjects.

What the Nicene Creed really does, and all that it does,

is to affirm the fact of inspiration in the pregnant saying that the Holy Ghost "spake by the prophets." This is the more remarkable, and the more emphatic in its significance, when we reflect that various theories of inspiration were already prevalent, and that the Church declined to recognize any one of them as exclusively Christian. The early Christian writers constantly referred to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as authoritative sources of divine knowledge, but it is impossible to gather from them any one consistent theory of inspiration. Origen was more precise. He declared that the plenitude of inspiration was such as to protect the sacred writers from any lapse of memory and from any error or superfluity; and when he found himself unable to reconcile the literal statements of Scripture with that theory, he escaped from the difficulty by treating them as allegories. In general the Church regarded Holy Scripture as primarily an edifying source of information. "The Scriptures edified because they instructed." There was no question anywhere of the fact of inspiration. Rather there was a tendency to recognize the operation of the enabling Spirit everywhere—the Spirit of Truth in the writers of the sacred word, enabling them to tell the truth; the Spirit of Understanding in the reader, enabling him to apprehend the truth; and the Spirit of Wisdom in the whole body of the Church, enabling it to discriminate the very and essential truth of Christ from matters of less moment, which sects and individuals might imagine, rightly or wrongly, to be taught in Holy Scripture. These were pious and permissible beliefs, and the Church forbade

none of them; but neither did it see fit to define any of them, lest perchance it might seem to exclude some other true though partial apprehension of the operation of the Life-Giving Spirit of God. Under the old dispensation that Spirit spake in many partial and various ways to the fathers in the prophets. Which of these would it be lawful to exclude by a new-fangled theory of inspiration? Under the new covenant that one and the self-same Spirit divideth to every man severally as He will, and it is by His holy inspiration that we are now enabled to think those things that are right. Who would presume to set up a theory of inspiration which would virtually deny that the various and partial inspirations of "the Holy Ghost who spake by the prophets" were generically different from the diversities of gifts by which that one and self-same Spirit now guides and inspires Christ's Church and its members? In the hard and fast theories of inspiration which have prevailed in modern times nothing is so pitiful as the unconscious but real assumption that the Holy Ghost, which spake of old to the fathers in the prophets, speaks no more in that new and fuller dispensation of the Spirit which our Saviour promised; and nothing in it is so profanely presumptuous as its unconscious and unintended, but unequivocal, contradiction of our Lord Himself, Who declared that while the fact of inspiration may be seen in its effects, its nature is inscrutable, and consequently undefinable. "The wind (He said) bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The Church of

Christ was right, then, in refusing to define the nature of inspiration, either in the Holy Scriptures or elsewhere. At all events, it did not define the nature of inspiration; it was content to profess its faith in the Holy Ghost, the Giver of all life, physical and spiritual, Who of old times spake in many strange ways, such as dreams and visions, to the fathers through the prophets, and whose constant presence—not for one age, but through all ages—Jesus Christ has promised to His Church. Our conclusion, therefore, is that no theory of inspiration either is or ought to be any part of Christianity; and that objections to Christianity which are founded, explicitly or implicitly, on any such theory, are utterly irrelevant. Hence all the difficulties created by the real or imaginary discoveries, and by the sound or unsound conclusions, of biblical critics, since they are difficulties only because of some preconceived theory of inspiration, may very properly cause reasonable doubts of that theory; but they involve no question of the Christian religion, which is bound up with no theory on that subject.

I know not how the thoughts which I have put before you may strike your minds; but to not a few troubled minds in these times it may come almost as a light from heaven, dispelling many a gloomy shade of doubt and difficulty, to learn that no past, present or possible discovery, whether of science or criticism, can cast one particle of doubt upon the Christian Faith as that Faith has been set forth and defined by the only competent authority, that is, by the voice of universal Christendom. There is more light of the same

sort to be had from the same source, and some of it I shall hope to show you in the next lecture. Meanwhile, and before proceeding further, may I not ask you to admit that the Chalcedonian Decree, so far as we have yet considered it, was no tyrannical encroachment on the lawful freedom of the individual Christian, but stands vindicated in this nineteenth century as a truly constitutional and catholic law of light and liberty?

LECTURE IV.

THE NICENE CREED.

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UNDER THE DECREE OF CHALCEDON THEORIES OF PREDESTINATION, SOTERIOLOGY, SPIRITUAL OPERATION, SACRAMENTAL GRACE AND ETERNAL JUDGMENT ARE NO PART OF CHRISTIANITY. SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE OF THE CREED DOES NOT VOID ITS PLAIN SIGNIFICANCE. THE CONCEPTION AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. THE CHURCH AS UNDERSTOOD IN THE CREED. POSITION OF THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE.

God is Love.—I JOHN iv. 8.

God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.—I JOHN i. 5.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. —JOHN iii. 16.

If the one [Lutheranism] was, as history shows us, in constant danger of antinomian developments, the other struck at the root of morality by making God Himself unjust. Forensic fictions of substitution, immoral theories of the Atonement, the rending asunder of the Trinity, and the opposing of the Divine Persons, like parties in a lawsuit, were the natural corollaries of a theory which taught that God was above morality and man beneath it.—REV. AUBREY MOORE, M. A.

J. S. Mill's well known words, "I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures," was a noble assertion of immutable morality, against a religion which, alas! he mistook for Christianity. The conscience of to-day—and it is a real gain that it should be so—refuses to believe that the imprimatur of religion can be given to that which is not good, or that God would put us to moral confusion. It would rather give up religion altogether than accept one which will not indorse and advance our highest moral ideas. —IBID.

In religion,
What damned error but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament.—SHAKSPEARE.

First, I commend my soul into the hands of God, my Creator; hoping and assuredly believing, through the only merits of Jesus Christ, my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting.—SHAKSPEARE'S WILL.

In the early Church, the careful distinction which later times have made between Baptism, Regeneration, Conversion and Repentance, did not exist. They all meant the same thing.—DEAN STANLEY.

I do not know whether I shall live again on earth or elsewhere; whether I shall be a being of three dimensions or four, or of no dimensions at all; whether I shall be in space or out of space. It is far better to give up speculations about accidental trifles, such as these; for accidents they are as compared with the essence of the second life, which consists in love.—E. A. ABBOTT.

My own dim life should teach me this,
That life shall live forevermore;
Else earth is darkness at the core,
And dust and ashes all that is.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And Thou hast made him: Thou art just.—TENNYSON.

WE have seen that no discovery of science, and no theory which can properly be called a scientific theory, conflicts, or ever can conflict, with Nicene Christianity. We have also seen that while a veracious criticism of the Holy Scriptures may indeed upset some modern theories of inspiration, they cannot disturb the Christian Faith, which is bound up with no theories on that subject. I have next to show that Christianity is not in the least responsible for certain other doctrinal beliefs which have been unwarrantably connected with it, and have greatly added to its difficul-

ties by making it either incredible to the intellect or repugnant to the conscience.

The first of these is the modern doctrine of predestination. It is commonly supposed to be founded on certain discourses, of St. Paul, and yet, strange as it may seem, those discourses, for centuries after they were written, do not appear to have been understood in the sense in which they have more recently been taken. The originator of the later doctrine of predestination was St. Augustine, one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, of the Fathers of the Church, who, nevertheless, by his teaching of that doctrine, poisoned and corrupted the religion he professed. In his early life St. Augustine had been a Manichean, believing, like other followers of Mani, that the universe is governed, not by one living and true God, but simultaneously by a God of Light and by another God of Darkness, who are engaged in an eternal conflict with each other. On his conversion to Christianity Augustine unconsciously retained not a little of the gloom of his original Manicheism; and, with the consistency of a remorseless logic, he did not hesitate to attribute to the God of Light Whom He adored a cruelty which were worthier to be ascribed to the God of Darkness whom he abhorred. Bad as Augustinian predestinarianism was, however, it was not so consistently dreadful as the later system of Calvin, which makes the salvation of men to depend upon an immutable decree of God, issuing solely from His eternal will before the foundations of the world were laid, and predicated on no divine foresight of the faith or good works of those who are saved. In the

fulness of time the elect are effectually called into a state of salvation; without regard to their conduct, they are accounted righteous; without regard to their personal disposition, they are constrained to continue in the way of salvation; and at last they are entirely sanctified and admitted to eternal glory. If the Calvinistic doctrine stopped there, it would reduce every human being who is saved to the condition of a spiritual automaton, irresistibly controlled by a Power exterior to itself; but at least the controlling Power could not be called cruel or unjust. Calvinism, however, does not stop there. It declares that from all eternity the number of the elect has been unchangeably fixed by the decree of God and can be neither increased nor diminished; so that no man who is not predestined to eternal life can possibly be saved, however he may live or die. From all eternity the reprobate man has been foreordained to be born into a fallen state of being, from the moment of his birth to lie under God's wrath and curse, to be liable to all the miseries of life and death, and at last to fall into the pains of hell forever. All this, remember, is supposed to happen because God has chosen of His own will to have it so. A man is saved or damned simply because God wills and irresistibly decrees that he shall be saved or damned; and God is supposed to will and decree the salvation of some and the damnation of others merely to please Himself.

Now, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that if this doctrine were any part of Christianity, I should renounce Christianity forthwith as immensely worse than atheism. It

is better not to believe in God than to believe Him to be inconceivably and capriciously malignant; better a thousand times to embrace agnosticism than to believe God to be an almighty demon. Yet millions of Christian people have gone through the world fancying that they believed these slanders against God, and many millions more have theoretically or practically renounced Christianity because they believed it to be responsible for them. If you ask some of the most virulent enemies of Christianity what makes their hatred so embittered, I believe you will find that it is this doctrine of predestination and another doctrine of a similar sort which have made Christianity not only incredible to their intellect but repulsive to their sense of justice.

In view of these facts it is something of a relief to be assured that neither the Augustinian nor the modern doctrine of predestination is any part of Christianity. Concerning the foreknowledge and decrees of God, as concerning His method of creation,—things which, from their very nature, are not rightly knowable, and therefore cannot be defined—not one single syllable is to be found in the Nicene Creed! But that is not all. The modern theory of election and reprobation is irreconcilable with the very first article of the Nicene Creed. That article declares that God, Who is the Maker of all things visible and invisible in heaven and earth, is not only almighty in power, but is also a Father in character. Now, as Christ said in His teaching, "What man is there of you" who would deliberately bring children of his own into existence, for the express purpose of consigning them "to the pains of hell forever?" Is there a man on

earth who would do such a thing, or entertain the thought of it for one single instant? There is no such man on earth; and there is no such God in heaven. There is no such God anywhere save in the insane imaginations of men whom overmuch one-sided learning hath made mad, and in the thoughts, but never truly in the hearts, of others who have been misled by them. God the Father Almighty, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is infinitely better, and not infinitely worse, than any man of you. It may sometime save some of you from the danger of a painful sort of scepticism to remember that the modern doctrine of predestination is no part of Christianity; but that if the Nicene Creed is true, and if the theology of Christ is true, that doctrine is false.

I would not have you think, however, that because I reject that dreadful doctrine with all the moral antipathy and intellectual energy of which I am capable, therefore I condemn those who think they hold it. Not at all. Our very strongest beliefs have a slighter hold upon us than we ever realize. Every one of us, for instance, believes, or indeed, we might say, he knows, that he is doomed to die; yet, practically, we live on as if we were to live forever, and the shadow of our coming doom casts no gloom on our lives. So, too, we think that we believe the Gospel of Christ; but if we only did believe it, as we think we do, how different we should be! How sweetly gracious in behavior! How patient under provocation! How serene in trouble! How loving to our friends! How magnanimous to enemies! How brotherly to all men! How little we should dread

death! How hopefully we should expect the day on which, for us, eternal life shall dawn! If we only half believed in Christ as we say we do and think we do, we should be far more like Him than we ever are. The trouble is that we believe in Him with the mind far more than with the heart; and it is with the heart that a man believeth unto righteousness. Just so, it is with the heart that men believe unto unrighteousness. If a man is brought up to believe a false and cruel doctrine, it does not always follow that the doctrine will make him cruel, though that, undoubtedly, is its natural effect. Other doctrines of a contrary nature may so completely overshadow the false and cruel doctrine that he shall hardly realize it intellectually and never at all appropriate it heartily. There is not a living man to-day in this world, however strongly he may think he holds the Calvinistic system, who would not be glad at heart to disbelieve it. So far as he does believe it, he believes it only with his mind. No living man either does or can believe it with his heart. Meanwhile a thousand influences of Christianity combine to countervail the influence of the unloved and unlovely doctrine. The Fatherhood of God is all against it. Every honest proclamation of the Gospel is inconsistent with it. The Sermon on the Mount is a categorical contradiction of it. The common instincts of justice, humanity, benevolence, are fatal to it; for no man can really believe that God is less just, less humane, less benevolent, than he himself is; and no man can really or heartily believe that a vast majority of his fellowmen, to whom he himself is bound to be just, humane and pitiful, have been arbitrarily doomed

by God Almighty to a horrible fate which outrages every instinct of justice, humanity and mercy. Hence, I, for one, do not believe that any man on this earth believes the doctrines of predestination to which I have referred. Any man who should undertake in this age of the world to preach them, as Jonathan Edwards preached them, though he should do it with an agony of soul as manifest as that of Edwards was, would drive his congregation from him in horror and amazement. Be that, however, as it may, it is your privilege and mine to know that those doctrines are no part of Christianity, but, on the contrary, that they are plainly inconsistent with the very first foundation article of the Christian Faith.

When we consider the endless controversies of mediæval and modern theologians concerning the divine means and method of human salvation, it is truly humbling and most instructive to turn to the sublime simplicity of the Nicene Creed. In popular theology one often finds something like a controversy between the persons of the Godhead, the Father standing as an impersonation of inexorable vengeance, and the Son as an impersonation of infinite goodness and divine compassion. Now, in the unity of the Godhead, there can be no such opposition of character. If there were, the unity of God would be destroyed. There would be two Gods or three Gods; there could no longer be one God. The truth is that popular theology contains in it a large amount of unconscious Manicheism, and offers to popular faith one God to be dreaded and another God

to be loved. Naturally that theology takes little note of the great Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. It looks not only chiefly but exclusively at the death of Christ, as if the hiding of His Godhead in a form of clay must not have been as great a sacrifice as the death which it contemplated, and by which He was at length released from His assumed condition of humiliation In the Nicene Creed there is no such dividing of the Godhead, no such partial and unsatisfactory apprehension of the atonement of Christ, nor any attempt whatever to devise a philosophical theory concerning it. There is no exaltation of the Incarnation, so as to make the death and passion of our Lord merely an incident of the Incarnation; neither is the mystery of the Incarnation represented as a merely introductory step to the sacrifice of Calvary. The Nicene Creed states the whole truth, and states it without one syllable of interpretation which our Lord and His Apostles withheld. It exalts nothing beyond measure, and depresses nothing from its due importance. "For us men and for our salvation (*δι' ἡμᾶς κ.τ.λ.*)," it says "He came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was made Man; for our sakes (*ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*) He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; (for our sakes) He cometh again with glory to judge the living and the dead." From first to last it is all "for us men and for our salvation;" in all the marvelous whole and in each particular of the whole, it was, and is, and is to be "for our sakes."

What an amazing contrast have we here to the endless intellectual muddle, the pretentious jargon and the arrogant absurdities of individual doctors, sects and churches that have undertaken to be wiser than the universal Church of Christ! Theories of the plan of salvation have cleared away no difficulties; they have made many. Some of the most effective and profane assaults that have ever been made upon Christianity have been grounded upon one or other of those theories; so that one might well hesitate before concluding whether those assaults, or the unauthorized theories which made them possible, are the more profane. I think it, therefore, necessary to insist that any theory whatever, and whether it be true or false, which pretends to pass one line beyond the limits of the reverent reserve of the Nicene Creed, is no part of Christianity, and is only too likely to be both untrue and presumptuously profane.

Precisely the same remark must be made concerning unauthorized theories of the operations of the Holy Spirit in the souls of individual men. It is our Saviour Himself, as we have seen, Who declares the operations of God's Spirit to be inscrutable, and consequently as undefinable as they are real and manifest. What volumes of controversy have there not been written on justification, adoption and sanctification! And after all, it has been justly said that the difference between the Roman doctrine and the Lutheran doctrine of justification is only the difference between a *quæ* and a *qua*. For my part, I care as little for the *quæ* as for the *qua*. There is a sense in which I could believe

the one or the other; consequently, there is a sense in which I believe both; and if I believed neither of the two, and had never heard of them, it would make not one particle of difference to Christianity, which knows neither of them, nor to my spiritual condition, which they do not affect. It is not botany that makes the flower to spring or that gives its fragrance; and it is not theology that makes the gift of God's grace. Botany tells things which are observed; but when theology attempts to tell the things of the Spirit, it attempts to tell what cannot be directly observed nor scientifically defined.

The Catholic Church of Christ, speaking in the language of the Nicene Creed, falls into no such absurdity. It adores the Holy Spirit as the Lord and Lifegiver, but it does not attempt to parcel out and label His ineffable Gifts, nor does it authorize others so to do. It has no mechanical theory, for instance, of a conversion which, when it once takes place, can never be repeated. It understands that all men who have erred and strayed from God's ways like lost sheep must, without exception, repent and be converted, that their sins may be blotted out. Without exception, I repeat; and therefore, since there is no man who does not daily err from God's way, there can be no man who does not need to be converted every day of his life. It is all a question of degree, and no definitions that the mind of man could frame or conceive would be sufficient to include all varieties and all degrees of human necessity and divine grace. Consequently, the Church of Christ sets forward no Procrustean bed of spiritual measurement, to the dimensions of which every soul must be stretched

or crushed. It demands of no man that he shall repeat the spiritual experience of another man. John Bunyan's Christian had his Slough of Despond, and his Hill of Difficulty; he lingered happy days in the Interpreter's House, groaned in the dungeon of Doubting Castle, and had a far-off view of the Delectable Mountains, before he crossed the narrow stream which lies this side of the Celestial City. All these things were true for Christian, that is, for John Bunyan, and for many others. But they are not true for all men. There are blessed souls who never floundered through any slough of despond, and never had one single battle with Giant Despair, but who go their happy way through life, trusting without doubt in their Father's love. Some there are to whom the grace of wisdom makes the whole world one great House of the Divine Interpreter, in which they learn lessons of truth from day to day. There are some before whose eyes no vision of the Delectable Mountains, and no view of the Heavenly City ever rises on this side of the Jordan, yet who humbly tread the path appointed for them, and who reach their destination quite as surely as the gallant Christian of John Bunvan's holy dream. One of the worst things in popular religion is that it prescribes one single line of experience to all men, women and children indiscriminately: and nothing could be more absurd, unless the lives of all men, women and children were as identical as they are infinitely various.

The Church of Christ does not require that men shall begin their conscious spiritual life with artificial contortions or with strained emotions. All men have sinned; she calls all men to repent and be converted. To all she promises the

unbounded grace of God and the assistance of His Holy Spirit. But for instructions concerning the operations of the Spirit she leaves them to learn from Holy Scripture and their own experience. The language of Scripture, studied for edification, not for purposes of controversy, is both simple and sufficient: "By grace are ye saved (it says), through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;" "therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God." No nicety of definition could add to the instruction or the comfort of such words as those. Every attempt at further and more minute definition has done monstrous mischief; but no such attempt has any warrant from the Catholic Church. Whenever, then, well meaning men would have you subject your spiritual nature to a course of frames and feelings to which you know it would not be possible for you to subject yourself sincerely, do not hesitate to refuse with energy. At all events maintain your own integrity of soul; because, if once you part with that, you can trust your own sincerity no more. If they call you to be converted, and thrust theories of conversion upon you, heed their call, but reject their theories. Turn away from every wrong thing you have fallen into; turn with all your heart to God your Saviour. But take no man's theory of the operations of the Holy Spirit; or if you do, then hold your theory with modesty, remembering that it is no part of Christianity, and that though it may be true for your particular case and many other cases like your own, it may be just as false for many others. There is many a benighted soul wandering this day in reckless and resentful unbelief because it has once or of-

tener pinned its faith to some crude theory of popular emotional religion, which it has practically tried and found to be a vain illusion. So do idle and unwarranted theories of Christianity become the fatal cause of bitterly resentful hatred of the truth which they were truly and sincerely, but unwisely and ignorantly, meant to serve.

They are many who might learn a lesson of humility from the reverent silence of the Catholic Church concerning the sacred mystery of sacramental grace. The Nicene Creed asserts the reality of sacramental grace in the acknowledgment of "One Baptism for the remission of sins;" but there it stops. The divine mystery and the unspeakable gift of the Holy Eucharist it does not define. The unbroken tradition and the universal custom of every branch of the Catholic Church has regarded the Holy Eucharist as chief among the *agenda* of the Church, the liturgy and its accessories (until recently in the Roman Communion alone) being left to the discrimination of each particular Church; but no definition of *credenda* concerning it is set forth in the Catholic Symbol. This is a very remarkable fact concerning which more than a few observations might well be made. Enough that it *is* a fact, which should teach us at least three things: 1st, to be cautious in forming opinions of the doctrine of the Sacraments; 2d, to be yet more careful not to set forth any opinions we may have formed as if they were catholic truth; and, 3d, always and everywhere to resist and deny the pretense that exact modern definitions, by whomsoever set forth, have the slightest color of catholic authority.

I have now to note a seventh topic on which the Catholic Church did not define, but which has recently engaged the minds of men to a great extent. It is astonishing that on the subject of Eschatology, concerning which whole libraries have been printed, the Catholic Faith gives us in the Greek original only fourteen words, in which it declares that our Lord Jesus Christ "cometh again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead," and affirms that "we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." Once again we are compelled to contrast the simplicity and reserve of the Catholic Church with the volubility of arrogant dogmatism displayed by vastly less respectable authorities. On the subject of future rewards and punishments the abundance of assertion has been in inverse ratio to the littleness of our knowledge. The *doctrina Romanensium*, or the vulgar Romanism of the middle age, went wild in its horrible declarations concerning the state of the lost; and the vulgar Protestantism of later times bated nothing of the Romish horrors; indeed it made them worse, by denying the existence of a purgatory, which, in the Romish system, left some chance of escape. From the cruel atrocity of Romish and Protestant doctrine concerning the last things, the common sense and instinct of mankind have justly recoiled; and I believe that it has been the horror of those abominable and unauthorized teachings, more than any other one thing, which has caused a multitude of men to renounce Christianity altogether. Of late years the recklessness of denial has been almost as remarkable, though not, assuredly, so atrocious, as the former recklessness of assertion. Now,

there is declared to be neither hell nor purgatory, nor any judgment at all worth thinking of. The reaction has certainly been extensive and radical; but Catholic Christians ought not to be swayed to the one extreme nor to the other. They cannot pretend to make void the words of Scripture, that "whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap." They cannot pretend that the tremendous word *aionios*, the significance of which transcends imagination, really means nothing of any consequence. But, on the other hand, they cannot transfer to eternity the conditions of time, nor apply to its unfathomable mysteries a terminology which is appropriate to time conditions only. Here we may adopt the language used by Bishop Wilberforce in interpreting the views of Frederick Denison Maurice, which Bishop Wilberforce seems to have approved. He says: "To represent God as revenging upon His creatures by torments through never-ending extensions of time their sinful acts committed here is (1) unwarrantably to transfer to the eternal world the conditions of this world. For time is of this world; and eternity is not time prolonged, but, rather, time abolished; and it is therefore logically incorrect to substitute in the Scriptural proposition for 'eternal death' 'punishment extended through a never-ending duration of time;' and (2), as this is unwarranted, so it is dangerous; (*a*) because by transferring our earthly notions of such prolonged vengeance to God, it misrepresents His character, (*b*) because as men recoil from applying to themselves or to others such a sentence, it leads to the introduction of unwarranted palliatives which practically explain away the true evil and fatal consequences of sin."

These views, like many others on the same subject, do not cover the whole ground. How should they? The whole ground is eternity; and while Maurice and Wilberforce may err in saying that "eternity is time abolished," yet at least eternity is not time, but beyond time and time conditions. What time is, no man knows; of its conditions relatively to ourselves we know something; of eternity and its conditions we know nothing. A man would be foolish to attempt to discourse of biology in the terms of mechanics; but far more foolish is he who attempts to discourse of eternity in the terms of time. When our Saviour spoke of eternal life, He did not speak in any such terms. He said, "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent." What, then, must eternal death be but to lose that knowledge? To lose the very thought of God; to lose the very recollection of Christ's Name; with that loss, to lose all that they include; to lose the sense of good, of truth, of beauty; consequently to become involved in unimagined evils, falsehoods, foulnesses, all springing from oneself to blight, to blind, to horrify. I marvel that those who love to maintain the doctrine of everlasting punishment should be so deficient in imagination as to dwell on torments artificially inflicted, when eternal death, that true perdition, the loss of God, must result in torments from within worse than the worst that could come from without. It is a dreadful subject when we make the best of it; but above every creature in the universe is "God the Father Almighty," who willeth not that any should perish, and whose loving kindness is over all His works. If

we ascend into heaven He is there; if we make our bed in hell, behold He is there also! In the hand of God the Father Almighty the Nicene Creed leaves the whole subject of eternity, simply teaching us to look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Let us not fail to remember that modern theories of the future life, whether they are revolting from their frightful ingenuity, or morally enervating from their lack of seriousness, are no part of Christianity.

In what has just been said of the impossibility of transferring to eternity the terminology which is appropriate to time only, I have suggested to you the ground of a distinction between the articles of the Creed, which I shall now endeavor to make clear to you. In my first lecture I referred to the popular notion that the essential articles of the Christian Faith, that is, as we now understand, of that Faith as defined in the Nicene Creed, are all propounded in the same dogmatic way, and are all intended to be held in the same way. In that lecture I went so far as to say that nothing could be further from the truth. I said that the dogmas of the Christian Faith are few; and that statement, I submit to you, has been sufficiently proved, since every one of those dogmas is contained in so brief a formula as the Nicene Creed. But I said further that these comparatively few dogmas are different in character, and that some of them are not pure dogmas at all, but illustrative parabolical suggestions of divine truths which human language cannot perfectly express, because imperfect human reason can-

not perfectly comprehend them. I think you will have no difficulty in perceiving the justice of this statement, if you observe the plain fact that the declarations of the Nicene Creed fall within three distinct categories. The first of these contains statements of eternal truths, that is of truths existing from eternity and in eternity ; the second contains statements of facts which have occurred, or are yet to occur, in time; and the third includes statements which relate both to time and to eternity. Manifestly, since all our language is the language of time, whatever we say concerning eternal Persons or eternal operations must be said imperfectly, or, in other words, it can be only suggestively, not literally and exactly, true. This subject is indeed most difficult ; and I should not venture to speak of it, if I did not know that not a little scepticism is caused by a misunderstanding of it, or rather by a misconception of it. Let me endeavor, then, as simply as I can, to explain what I believe to be the truth of it, and this I shall do perhaps to most advantage by showing how completely men fail, and must fail, in every attempt to define what is eternal in the terms of time.

Whenever men undertake to define the one only Eternal Being, they insensibly fall into the language of negation. A striking instance of this is the definition of the Westminster Assembly's Catechism, in which God is defined to be "a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, in wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth." Now, this is sublime ; but if we remember that we do not know what a Spirit is, but only that it is not a material be-

ing, and if we remember that by eternal we simply mean not temporal, that is, not limited by time conditions, the whole proposition becomes one continuous negation from beginning to end. Its meaning is this: that God is *not* a material being, that He is *not* subject to conditions of space or time, that He is *not* capable of mutation, and that all these negations apply at once to Himself and to all His attributes. Much in the same way, the First of the Thirty Nine Articles says that God is "without body, parts or passions;" which is simply a threefold negation. Mr. Spencer himself, in the very act of affirming the existence of a Power beyond the forces and phenomena of nature, falls into a double negation when he says that Power is "inscrutable" and that it is "without beginning or end." Could there be a more striking proof of the incapacity of human language to define the Eternal than the fact that when men attempt to tell what the Eternal is, they are constrained rather to tell what it is not? Nay, if they express themselves in positive terms, they use those terms in some exceptional and peculiar sense. Thus, when the Nicene Creed itself declares that God is "almighty," it does not mean that God can do anything whatsoever, as, for instance, that He can accomplish an absurdity or realize a contradiction. Thus we find that the only adjective applied to God by the Nicene Creed is true, indeed, but true in a materially qualified and restricted sense.

If it be true, as it is, that we can never by searching find out God, it is much more certain that human speech cannot tell perfectly or even accurately what He is. The ut-

most that is possible for us is to learn something concerning Him, and to express that something in such approximately appropriate terms or symbols as are supplied by human language. I believe, for instance, that one of the most striking evidences of the truth of the Christian Faith is the doctrine of the Holy Trinity as it is set forth in the Nicene Creed, a doctrine which, to my mind, reconciles all the science of the present age with Christianity, because it furnishes the missing link between them. But how does the Creed define the triune being of God? Not, most assuredly, in such a string of paradoxes as we find in the so-called Athanasian Creed, nor, in a rhyming arithmetical word-puzzle, "Three in One and One in Three," such as I have heard poor little children taught to sing in a Church Sunday School. The Nicene Creed was not framed to perplex but to instruct, and it teaches men to believe in the Triune God precisely as Christ Himself taught, that is, in the language of symbol. It speaks, as He spake, of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and what symbolism is here! If we had here to do only with the character of God, the symbol of human fatherhood, in however lofty a sense, would fall far short of the fulness of divine benevolence, and therefore, even in that sense, it would be only an imperfect symbol or illustration of a reality which transcends human knowledge and human understanding. But when we speak in the Creed of God the Father, in distinction from God the Son, it is not of His character that we are speaking, but of the mode of His divine being, in which there is a Father, and a Son, begotten of the Father,

and a Spirit proceeding from the Father. No doubt this language is the very best that could be chosen, since it is the language of our Lord Himself. Yet we must not forget that it is human language; nor must we forget that it is the language of parabolic symbol, not the language of exact definition. The fatherhood known to human beings is part of a complex relationship between separate individuals, which has no place in the unity of God. Generation, as it is known to men, is an operation which takes place in time; and when we apply that word to a fact existing in the Godhead, we must see that we do not fall into the heresy of Arius, who thought of it as an event, and therefore said that, since the Son is begotten of the Father, there must have been a time when He was begotten, and therefore a *time*, still more remote, when He was not; forgetting that in the eternal Godhead there is no such thing as an event, and no such thing as time. Just so, the word Spirit is a picture word in itself, and when we say that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father, we say only half the truth, since the same Spirit abideth in the Father. I trust you will endeavor to understand that I am trying to remove a difficulty, surely not to make one. When I come to our next lecture, I hope to show you that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is the only doctrine of God that is sufficient, or even credible, in these times. But just now I wish to impress you with the truth that the eternal things of God cannot be exactly defined in human language, and that not only the Church but our Blessed Lord Himself has been constrained to use the language of

symbol in revealing all we know of Him in Whose Eternal Unity are Father, Son and Holy Ghost. In thinking of these symbolic words we must remember that they are symbols, and that these symbols are necessary because exact definition is not possible. If we would rightly understand them, we must banish every thought of *time*, and strive to realize the truth of an eternal *relation* so intimate that while the Son is of the Father, and not the Father of the Son, their unity is perfect; and while the eternal Spirit proceedeth from the Father, and not contrariwise the Father from the Spirit, yet, neither in time nor in eternity can they be disunited. Never forget that the *unity* of God is the first article of the Christian Faith. We begin our confession by declaring that "we believe in one God." Remember, therefore, that any conception of the Blessed Trinity which is clearly inconsistent with the indivisible unity of God, is *ipso facto* condemned as a false conception. If, then, it has ever seemed to you that the symbolic language of the Creed implies a contradiction of the unity of God, believe me you have utterly misunderstood it, and that, perhaps, because you have forgotten that it is symbolical and illustrative, not the language of exact definition.

While we are bound to avoid straining the symbolical language of the Creed lest we should impart a meaning into it which it was never meant to bear, we must not less carefully avoid all tampering with the reality of facts which, having occurred in time, are capable of being plainly stated, in human language. There have been signs, of late, of a dis-

position to deny, or to explain away, at least two statements of fact which are plainly enunciated in the Creeds.

When the Apostles' Creed says that the Son of God "was conceived by the Holy Ghost (and) born of the Virgin Mary," it is silly and dishonest to pretend that this means nothing more than that He was conceived, as all men are, by the agency of vital energies which are derived from the Holy Ghost, the Giver of life. A Creed, like a law, must be interpreted consistently with the intention of the authority which sets it forth; and nothing is more certain than this, that the Churches which set forth the Apostles' Creed have always intended and still intend that pregnant sentence to mean that our Lord was conceived, as no mere man ever was, by the direct, and special intervention of the Holy Ghost. I can think of nothing more dishonest than to palter in a double sense with plain words on so sacred a subject. I admit that it is necessary, nay essential, to disembarrass Christianity of every needless difficulty. That, indeed, is no small part of the duty of the Christian apologist at this time. But the pretended apologist who takes away one fragment of the faith itself, under the pretext of removing difficulties, is no apologist, but an assailant in disguise. Let there, then, be no misapprehension of this point: he who denies that Jesus Christ was "conceived by the Holy Ghost" in the plain sense of those words as they are used in the Apostles' Creed, or that "the only begotten Son of God, by Whom all things were made," "came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary," in the plain sense of those words, as they are used in the Nicene Creed, denies the Christian Faith.

I am bound to be not less explicit with regard to the resurrection of our Lord, concerning which both the Creeds declare that on "the third day (after His death upon the cross) He rose again from the dead." It is not honest to interpret these words in any sense less significant than they obviously bear in those Creeds. That they may mean far more is more than possible. St. Paul declares that the body which is buried in the grave is like "bare grain" sown in the ground; it is "not that body that shall be" in the resurrection. "There is a natural body," he says, "and there is a spiritual body;" and he tells us that the spiritual body of those who are raised from the dead is to be made like unto the glorious Resurrection Body of Christ. Now, all we read of Christ's appearances after His resurrection goes to show that His Body was no longer what it had been, nor as it had been, before His death. It had all the powers and faculties of a material body. It bore unquestionable marks of its identity with that very Body which was crucified; and yet it was subject to no material disabilities or restraints. It is idle, and it seems to me to be as profane as idle, to attempt to theorize upon this subject. But to deny the fact of Christ's real and bodily resurrection from the dead is to deny more than a single article of Christianity; it is to reject the foundation stone on which the truth of Christ's religion rests. If Christ be not risen, then is Christianity an empty dream.

Yet I should hardly be justified in omitting to remind you that in the conception of Christ, and also in His resurrection, there was a meeting of the temporal and the eternal; in the

one case an entering of the eternal into the limitations of time, and space, and matter, and in the other a withdrawal of the eternal from those limitations. Now, we do not know what time is, nor what space is, nor what matter is. For my part, I believe, as many others do, that time, and space, and matter are representative illusions, which only imperfectly represent realities which we can never rightly know in this world. Consequently I believe that alike in the incarnation and in the resurrection there was an exhibition of divine operations under the illusory conditions in the midst of which our human life is lived. I believe, therefore, that both of these transactions and the whole Life that lay between them must have been more, and must have meant more, than it has entered into the mind of man to think. In this life we must be content to know things as they seem. While we are men on earth, bound by time conditions, and informed by sense perceptions which are so largely illusions, we must be satisfied to know in part, and according to the limitations with which we are encompassed.

It was one of the weaknesses of a strong man that made Matthew Arnold so constantly cry out against anthropomorphism. Over and over again he moaned, "We never know how anthropomorphic we are!" What else than anthropomorphic should we be? What else can we be? We are human beings, that is we belong to the genus homo or ἄνθρωπος, we can know nothing at all as it appears to creatures organized as man is. Our thoughts are all picture forms, that is μορφάι, of things as we perceive them. What else, then, can they be than anthropomorphic? Let us

grant, as we surely must, that we see nothing as it is, that light and color, for example, are not beyond us, as we picture them to ourselves, but within our eyes, and nowhere else. Shall we therefore close our eyes and refuse to see things as we may and can? Shall we refuse to study them because our utmost studies fall short of perfect knowledge? Would Mr. Arnold have advised us to do that? Or, in philosophy, would he have counselled us not to think, because our thoughts are necessarily founded on illusive sense-perceptions? It was only in religion that Mr. Arnold found anthropomorphism to be intolerable; but he considered it reprehensible in men to conceive of the nature or operation of the Divine Spirit, after the only fashion of spiritual being that is known to man, that is, the spirit that is in himself. If there be such a Divine Spirit at all, and if It can at all be revealed to man, then both the nature and the operation of that Spirit can be revealed to man only in such fashion as a man can apprehend. Call that apprehension anthropomorphic, if you will; it is analogous to every other human apprehension of the universe in which man lives and of the things and persons it contains. So, returning to the Incarnation and the Resurrection of the Only Begotten Son of God, I do not know what these events were, nor how they appeared, on the other side of the impenetrable veil which divides time, space and matter from eternity; but on this side they were manifested as the Creeds declare. The Son of God "was incarnate of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, and was made Man, was crucified, dead and buried, descended into hell, and the third day rose again according to the Scriptures."

If I have been at all able to carry your thoughts along with me, I think you must surely have understood that my design is not to minimize the Christian Faith in any way whatever, but to deepen and intensify your sense of its profound significance. When it speaks of eternal realities in a language of symbol borrowed from the conditions under which we live in this world, we are to remember that such language must fall very far short of the divine truth it is intended to suggest, and therefore must not be so strained as to belittle or belie that truth. When it speaks of sublime transactions, manifested to the eyes of men and yet pertaining also to eternity, we are not to think that those transactions were less than they appeared to human apprehension, but rather that in the eternal world they must have been and seemed incomparably more. And now I submit to you that when the same Creed speaks of a fact or an object which actually exists in time, it is not permissible to treat that fact or object in any other sense than that in which the framers of the Creed intended it to be understood. Hence when the Creed declares that one article of the Christian Faith is to believe "in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church," I think you must admit that it is a part of Christianity to believe at least so much as that.

If we ask ourselves what the fathers of the Church meant when they professed that faith, I do not think we can go far astray in the answer. When the Nicene Creed was set forth, the Catholic Church of Christ was an existing institution which was easily identified, because there was nothing else in the world which pretended to be the Catholic Church.

There was then one body holding everywhere the same faith, celebrating everywhere the same sacraments, teaching everywhere the same code of morals, everywhere officered and governed in substantially the same manner, everywhere claiming to be the Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ; and there was only one such body. Wherever a different faith was taught, or different rites were practised, those who held to the universal faith and worship were catholics, and those who introduced or practised novelties were not catholics. The former were in the Church; the latter had neither part nor lot in its affairs. Concerning the government of the Church there was no disagreement. With many local variations in subordinate matters, substantially the same constitution existed wherever the Church was found. In every local Church there was a bishop, and only one, surrounded by his presbyters and deacons, and in no Church would the bishop or his people have been satisfied of his ministerial authority, if they had not believed that his commission had been derived from men whose predecessors had been commissioned by the Apostles of Christ. The ecumenical Councils did not create these facts. They were facts for centuries before one single ecumenical council had been held. All that the ecumenical Councils did was to accept them and respect them as they were. The ecumenical Councils made certain regulations for the preservation of the constitution of the Church as it already existed; they neither encouraged nor tolerated innovations; they refused judicially to change the customs of particular Churches; from the Council of Nicæa downwards their consistent language was,

"Let the ancient customs prevail." The ecumenical Councils would have utterly refused to authorize or sanction any other constitution than that which was substantially universal in the Church. They would have wasted no time in asking whether the proposed constitution might, or might not, be theoretically a good one. For them it would have stood condemned by the single fact that it was new. They would simply have said, "We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God." In the same way, if it had been proposed to dispense with any part of the universally existing constitution, they would have wasted no time in inquiring whether that part of the constitution was or was not indispensable to the being of a Church. They would simply have said, "Let the ancient customs prevail." In following the immemorial and universal customs of the holy Church throughout all the world, no one could take damage; in departing from them, no man could be sure that he was not making a beginning of divisions in the Body of Christ.

It was one great misfortune of the Reformation that this conservatism of the ecumenical Councils was so widely forgotten, and that novelties of order and organization were then and afterwards introduced into various Churches. Surely there is both warning and instruction in the fact that, in our own generation, one of the chief obstacles to a restoration of unity among Christians, who have no longer any other cause of separation from each other, is that the forefathers of some of them, one hundred, two hundred or three hundred years ago, chose to adopt Church Constitutions unknown to the customs of the Holy Catholic Church

at any previous epoch of its whole existence. I think we must admit that when a step has been taken which has manifestly led to ill results, it is the part of wisdom to retrace that step; and therefore I think the Lambeth Conference was wise in laying it down as one of the indispensable steps to Christian Unity that "the Historic Episcopate" must be everywhere accepted. In so doing the Anglican Bishops did what the ecumenical Councils would have done. Even the ecumenical Councils never pretended to dispense with the immemorial customs of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. All that the Bishops of the Anglican Communion have done is to refuse to assume a power to which the ecumenical Councils did not pretend.

But here we must note another particular in which the Lambeth Conference most wisely followed in the footsteps of the ecumenical Councils. Those venerable Councils, when they declared it to be an article of the Christian Faith to believe in "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church," undoubtedly referred to the historic Church, with its historic constitution as a fact, and an unalterable fact, of historical Christianity. But in this, as in so many other things, they did not enter into theory; and I am thoroughly convinced that if they had tried to frame a theory on that subject, they would hopelessly have failed. At all events, they set forth no theory; and consequently no theory of the constitution of the Christian Church has one particle of authority from the Nicene Creed. The Lambeth Conference likewise framed no theory on that subject, and it is much to be regretted that some of its members; few in number and by no

means conspicuous either for learning or for authority, have had the hardihood to publish expositions of the intention of that conference which are at variance with the language of the Conference itself. Among those who hold as strongly to the historic episcopate as these self-constituted expositors of its meaning are many who hold quite irreconcilable theories concerning it; and if a future Lambeth Conference were to attempt to put forward a consistent theory of the Constitution of the Catholic Church, I venture to think that it would fail egregiously. I am sure that it ought to fail, because it would be trying to do more than the Catholic Church itself has ever done or tried to do. It would be trying to erect a theory as an article of faith; and in the very act of seeking to promote the cause of unity, it would be raising an unnecessary barrier of division between Christian people.

I have spoken of this subject at more length than I might otherwise have done, because I believe that it may be of service to you to know how truly Catholic is the position taken by the Lambeth Conference in reference to it, and how admirably it has kept within Catholic lines in standing firmly for the Catholic Church as that Church was known and recognized by the ecumenical Councils, without adding one syllable of theory to the language of the Creeds. I have thought it the more necessary to do so, because I believe that Christian Unity will never be restored in this world on any other than the Chalcedonian basis of unswerving fidelity to the Catholic Faith and unlimited liberty in all other particulars; and, until Christian Unity shall be restored upon that basis, Christianity will lack the noblest evidence

of its divine authority. It was our Lord Himself Who prayed "that they may all be one, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

It is needless to recapitulate at any great length the particulars of the investigation of the Chalcedonian Decree which we have now concluded. In establishing the Nicene Creed as the sole and sufficient exposition of the Christian Faith, that decree, which the whole Christian world so signally ratified, did not only provide a touchstone of dangerous error; it established the citadel of Christianity. It made Christianity unassailable on any possible ground of scientific discovery, or on any conceivable ground of critical research. It excluded from it false philosophies of the Divine Decrees, and presumptuous doctrines of future punishment. It set forth a summary of truths which Christ Himself taught concerning the Divine Being, and it modestly set forth those truths in the picture language which our Lord Himself had used. It told the marvellous facts of His Incarnation, Passion, Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension plainly, in the sober terms of historic statement, but without attempting to expound the hidden and eternal mysteries which those events must beyond all doubt have included. It neither set forth nor allowed scientific schemes of the plan of salvation which is known to God alone, nor any hard and fast theories of the operations of divine grace either directly to the personal soul or mediately through the sacraments. And lastly, it held fast to the historic Church of Christ, the ark of safety to them that

enter it, hailing it as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, yet, with all this, neither pretending to define what is necessary to the being of a Church nor allowing anything to be dispensed with which the ancient customs of the Universal Church had held and practised from the times of the Apostles. Christianity has never been improved by adding to the Faith as thus defined. Every unauthorized definition has served only to expose it to new forms of assault. In the present times there is good need that the Christian Faith should be discriminated from unauthorized additions. I trust that the way of strength and safety may modestly be recognized by those to whom the defense of the Faith has been committed; and the way of strength and safety has not now to be discovered. It was marked out many centuries ago by the wisdom of universal Christendom in the formulation of the Chalcedonian Decree.

LECTURE V.

THE GOD OF SCIENCE IS THE TRIUNE GOD OF CHRISTIANITY.

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The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.—PSALM xiv. 1.

In Him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring.—ST. PAUL, Acts xvii. 28.

There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all.—EPH. iv. 6.

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.—JOHN i. 18.

The Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father.—JOHN xv. 26.

A little philosophy inclineth men's minds to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion.—BACON.

No inductive conclusions are more than probable.—JEVONS.

In spite of its immense difficulty of application, and the aspersions which have been mistakenly cast upon it, the theory of probabilities, is the noblest, as it will in course of time prove perhaps the most fruitful, branch of mathematical science. Is is the very guide of life, and hardly can we take a step or make a decision of any kind without, correctly or incorrectly, making an estimation of probabilities. . . . The whole cogency of inductive reasoning, as applied to science, rests upon probability.—IBID.

What I mean by the rationality of a belief in any hypothesis is its fitness to be accepted and acted upon because it has in its favor the strongest probabilities of the case, so far as we can grasp these probabilities. I know of no other foundation for a belief in anything; for belief is the acceptance by the mind of some proposition, statement, or supposed fact, the truth of which depends upon evidence addressed to our senses, or to our intellectual perceptions, or to both.—GEORGE TICKNOR CURTIS.

The one act of faith in the convert to science, is the confession of the universality of order, and of the absolute validity, in all times, and under all circumstances, of the law of causation. This confession is an act of faith, because, by the nature of the case, the truth of such propositions is not susceptible of proof.—HUXLEY.

The very rationality of the creation, in our deepest analysis and broadest survey of it, leads the mind, by the conditions inseverable from its reasoning faculties, to see in its perfect relations the inevitable congruity of its intelligent Cause. And all this, be it observed, results after science has disclosed the splendid treasures of its knowledge, the beauty and indisputable accuracy of its methods, and the new senses with which it has endowed itself by its instruments.—DALLINGER.

It [the dissipation of energy] enables us distinctly to say that the present order of things has not been evolved through infinite past time by the agency of laws now at work, but must have had a distinctive beginning, a state beyond which we are totally unable to penetrate, a state, in fact, which must have been produced by other than now [visibly] acting causes.—PROFESSOR TAIT.

If this theory [of the dissipation of heat] be true, physical science instead of giving any countenance to the notion of matter having existed from eternity, distinctly teaches that creation took place, that the present system of nature and its laws originated, at an approximately assignable date in the past.—PROFESSOR FLINT.

None of the processes of nature, since the time when nature began, have produced the slightest difference in any molecule. We are therefore unable to ascribe either the existence of the molecules or the identity of their properties to the operation of any of the causes which we call natural. On the other hand, the exact quality of each molecule to all others of the same kind gives it, as Sir John Herschel has well said, the essential character of "a manufactured article," and precludes the idea of its being eternal and self-existent.—PROFESSOR CLARKE MAXWELL.

Let no one imagine that, should we ever penetrate this mystery [of life], we shall thereby be enabled to reduce, except from life, even the lowest form of life. Sir W. Thompson's splendid suggestion of vortex-atoms, if it be correct, will make us thoroughly to understand matter and mathematically to investigate all its properties. Yet its very basis implies the absolute necessity of an intervention of creative power to form or to destroy one atom of even dead matter.—PROFESSOR TAIT.

The origin or cessation of rotation in a perfect fluid must be the effect

of supernatural action; in other words, every vortex-atom must owe the rotation which gives it its individuality to a divine impulse.—PROFESSOR FLINT.

The physical laws may explain the inorganic world, the biological laws may account for the development of the organic; but of the point where they meet, of that strange borderland between the dead and the living, science is silent. It is as if God had placed everything in earth and heaven in the hands of nature, but reserved a point at the genesis of life for His direct appearing.—DRUMMOND.

Men of science will frankly admit their inability to point to any satisfactory experimental proof that life can be developed save from demonstrable antecedent life.—TYNDAL.

Life precedes organization.—HUXLEY.

In the materialistic explanations of the universe, we find that the formula of materialism works very well until the phenomena of consciousness emerge, and then it breaks down.— IVERACH.

Another source of the conviction of the existence of God, connected with the reason, and not with the feelings, impresses me as having much more weight. This follows from the extreme difficulty, or rather, impossibility, of conceiving the immense and wonderful universe, including man, with his capacity of looking far backward and far into futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity.—DARWIN, Life and Letters, vol. i. 312.

You have expressed my inward conviction, though far more vividly and clearly that I could have done, that the universe is not the result of chance.—IBID, vol. i. 316.

I cannot anyhow be contented to view the wonderful universe, and specially the nature of man, and to conclude that everything is the result of brute force. I am inclined to look at everything as resulting from design and law.—IBID, vol. ii. 312.

Research has already shown us reason to believe "that even chemical atoms are very complicated structures, that an atom of pure iron is probably a vastly more complicated system than that of the planets and other satellites, that each constituent of a chemical atom must go through an orbit in the millionth part of the twinkling of an eye, in which it successively or simultaneously is under the influence of many other constituents, or possibly comes into collision with them, and that each of these particles is, as Sir John Herschel has beautifully said, forever solving differential equations which, if written out in full, might

perhaps belt the earth." Now, what does this mean, if not that every ultimate atom, is full to the very heart of God, and that every particle of dust or every drop of water is crowded with traces of the action of the Divine Reason, not less marvelous, it may be, than those which astronomy exhibits in the structure of the heavens, and the evolution of the heavenly bodies?—PROFESSOR FLINT.

Then came the age of physical science. . . . . Its theory of knowledge was a crude empiricism; its theology unrelieved deism. God was "throned in magnificent inactivity in a remote corner of the universe," and a machinery of "second causes" had practically taken His place. . . . . Meanwhile His immanence in nature, the "higher pantheism," which is a truth essential to true religion, as it is to true philosophy, fell into the background. . . . . Darwinism, under the disguise of a foe, did the work of a friend. It has conferred upon philosophy and religion an inestimable benefit, by showing us that we must choose between two alternatives. Either God is everywhere present in nature, or He is nowhere. He cannot be here, and not there. He cannot delegate His power to demigods called "second causes."—REV. AUBREY MOORE, M. A.

The infinite and eternal Power that is manifested in every pulsation of the universe is none other than the living God.—PROFESSOR FISKE.

God the Father is the ground of creation;
God the Son is the law of creation;
God the Holy Ghost is the life of creation.

God the Father originates;
God the Son regulates;
God the Holy Ghost actuates.

God the Father is Deity invisible;
God the Son is Deity manifested;
God the Holy Ghost is Deity communicated.

—REV. H. V. D. JOHNS, D. D.

Design, purpose, intention, appear, when all the facts of the universe are studied in the light of all our reasoning faculties, to be ineradicable from our view of the creation. Teleology does not now depend for its existence on Paleyan "instances;" but all the universe, its whole progress in time and space, is one majestic evidence of teleology. The will and

purpose running through it are as incapable of being shut out of our consciousness and reasoning faculties, as its phenomena and their modes are of being rendered wholly imperceptible by our senses. . . . . The teleology—that is, the inseverable motive, as it were, of all the activities and interactions of nature—must be the product of mind.—DR. DALLINGER.

There is a wider teleology, which is not touched by the doctrine of evolution, but is actually based upon the fundamental proposition of evolution. That proposition is that the whole world, living and not living, is the result of the mutual interaction, according to definite laws, of the forces possessed by the molecules of which the primitive nebulosity of the universe was composed. If this be true, it is no less certain that the existing world lay potentially in the cosmic vapor, and that a sufficient intelligence could, from a knowledge of the properties of the molecules of that vapor, have predicted, say, the state of the fauna of Britain in 1869, with as much certainty as one can say what will happen to the vapor of breath in a cold winter's day. . . . . The teleological and mechanical views of nature are not necessarily mutually exclusive. On the contrary, the more purely a mechanist the speculator is, the more firmly does he assume the primordial molecular arrangement of which all the phenomena of the universe are the consequences; and the more completely he is thereby at the mercy of the teleologist, who can always defy him to prove that this primordial molecular arrangement was not intended to evolve the phenomena of the universe. —HUXLEY.

WHEN we analyze the propositions or dogmatic affirmations of the Nicene Creed, we find that some of them are Theological, that is, they relate to the being and nature of God; that others are Christological, that is, they relate to the nature and work of Christ; and that others are Anthropological, that is, they relate to mankind. In the present lecture we shall confine ourselves to the Theological group. Before entering upon it, however, I must enter a formal denial of two prevalent opinions which I hold to be both false and mischievous.

It has become a kind of habit with many persons to talk about the scientific method of research, and to contrast it with the religious and philosophical method, as if they were entirely different from each other, and as if the scientific method resulted in a certitude which cannot be attained by the religious and philosophical method. Both of these impressions are alike untrue. The scientific or Baconian method consists in ascertaining facts by careful observation, and in verifying them as far as possible by decisive experiments, before attempting to explain them or to construct theories concerning them. When the facts have been scientifically ascertained, the logic by which veracious inferences are drawn from them differs in no respect from the logic of the schools. Undoubtedly it is the tendency of the philosophical dreamer to assume that some brilliant speculation is true because it is brilliant, without sufficiently ascertaining the soundness of his premises—that is his weakness; and on the other hand, it is the weakness of the man of science that he is too prone to assume that there can be no reality which does not lie within the sphere of physical experiment. But, in the rational discussion of any subject whatsoever, in which the facts are conceded to be true, the logic of the man of science is precisely the same as that of the man of letters; and the certitude of the one may be as indubitable as the certitude of the other. Thus, what we call life is beyond the region of direct experiment. It cannot be weighed nor measured. The tests of the laboratory fail to reveal its secret. Yet the processes of logic, when applied to many facts of observation, constrain the scientific

investigator to believe beyond all doubt in the real existence of life; and it is in precisely the same way, and through precisely the same rational processes, that we reach an equally indubitable certitude of the existence of an original Source of life.

Again it is often taken for granted that theology assumes much and deals largely in conjectural hypothesis, while Science assumes nothing and adopts no hypothesis which known facts do not demand. Precisely the reverse is true. Theology assumes nothing that Science does not assume; and if some of the truths which it sets forth are capable of being represented as hypotheses, their truth must be established by evidence of precisely the same sort and amount of probability as is held to be sufficient to establish scientific hypotheses which no one disputes. Thus, the hypothesis of evolution, which is simply incapable of experimental verification, is nevertheless almost universally admitted by men of science, because, while that hypothesis cannot itself be verified, it explains and brings into harmonious unity a multitude of facts which have been severally ascertained. It is on precisely the same ground, and on no other, that any theological or religious hypothesis is entitled to acceptance. I do not say, indeed, that the facts on which religious hypotheses are grounded are invariably the same as those on which scientific hypotheses are grounded; but this I do say, that the facts on which religion depends must be as surely ascertained, and that the hypotheses on which religious faith relies must rest upon as high a probability, and command as strong and irresistible a certitude, as any fact or hypothe-

sis of science. In all I have to say in the present lecture I shall use no premises which are not confessedly as good for physical science as for theology.

In treating the subject now before us, we may conveniently adopt the arrangement of the school authors, who approach it by seeking answers to these three questions: First, *An sit Deus*, that is to say, Whether there be a God; Second, *Quid sit Deus*, or What is God; and Third, *Qualis sit Deus*, or What may we know concerning God?

1. To the first question, Whether there be a God, the corporate reason of mankind gives an affirmative answer; and the corporate conclusions of universal human reason, however imperfect in matters of detail, are not lightly to be disregarded. We need not depend upon them, however, in this case, since substantially the some logic consciously or unconsciously determines the belief of every individual. For that reason I discard what is called the metaphysical argument for God's existence. I certainly do not deny its cogency to some minds; but I do not care to dwell upon it, because it is cogent to only a few minds of exceptional training and capacity. Neither, at this point, shall I use the teleological argument, or the argument from design, because, while it is exceedingly strong to very many minds when once suggested to them, I do not believe that it is the argument which has actually produced the universal verdict of human reason that there is a God.

That argument is the argument from cause and effect. From the infancy of the human race it has been impossible

for it to believe that this finite world and the finite universe to which it belongs can have come into existence without the agency of some cause beyond them, and this impossibility has arisen from the fact that all human experience, and perhaps the constitution of the human mind itself, make it impossible to conceive that any finite thing can be, or that any event can happen, without a cause, near or remote, visible or invisible. When we speak of a thing happening by chance, we do not mean that it had no cause, but that the cause, or combination of causes, which brought it to pass, was of such a kind that the effect could not be foreseen. The simplest event that can happen postulates a cause; and in complex or complicated events the same postulate is correspondingly strengthened. The falling of an apple postulates a cause, and the following up of that clue led to the discovery of the universal law of gravity. Now, if we cannot believe that a single apple falls to the ground without a cause, it is infinitely more incredible that the law of gravity which controls the motions of the spheres, and of every atom of every one of them, exists without a cause; and a universe existing by virtue of an almost infinite complexity of laws, each of which includes almost a whole infinitude of facts, is utterly incredible. In order to imagine it we must abandon the law of causation altogether, and assert, first, that things can come into existence and events can happen without a cause; and second, that an orderly and reasonable but finite universe can be produced and sustained without a reasonable cause, which is still more inconceivably absurd.

Against this argument unsophisticated human reason makes no objection. But sophistry raises this objection, that what we call a cause may really be nothing but a point in an invariable sequence of facts. Very well; we do not deny that; but we ask, What causes the sequence? What makes it invariable? And does not the invariability of a sequence postulate a cause far more imperiously than the connection of any two points that can occur in it? Again, it is objected that the universe may be a growth, and that, therefore, it need not have a cause beyond itself. Once again we ask, What causes the growth? By its very nature growth is not eternal; it must, therefore, have had a beginning; what made it begin to grow? Growth is a process of perpetual change; what causes the change? Growth must proceed in some particular order; what determines or causes the order of the growth? A third rather clumsy objection is made by David Hume, which I should hardly care to notice but for its near approximation to the agnosticism of the present day. Admitting, he said in effect, that we cannot conceive, for instance, of a house coming into existence, without assuming that it must have had a builder, yet we are not for that reason to infer that the universe must have had a Maker; because we know all about the building of a house, and we know nothing of the making of the universe. This is much the same as to say that although we cannot imagine the simplest things which fall within our knowledge to occur without an adequate cause, we can imagine the most complicated of all finite things to have been uncaused. So stated, this objection needs no answer.

Only one objection remains. Since it is manifestly irrational to suppose that finite things can be produced or that events can happen without a cause, and since the conception of a system of reasonably connected things and orderly events without a reasonable cause is utterly impossible, there is no escape from the inference that there must be a Supreme and Reasonable Cause of the universe and its phenomena, unless by maintaining that the system of the universe is so essentially unreasonable as to require no cause to account for it. On the physical side this assumption is contradicted by every fact of science. There is nothing which the researches of science have more thoroughly ascertained than that the universe is governed by universal and inexorable law; and to say that this is a universe of law is to deny that it is a universe of unreason.

On the moral side the assertion of an unreasonable universe has certainly a semblance of support. We are constrained to admit that sin and suffering and sorrow are to be found here, and that they are apparently bound up with the system of things experimentally known to us. But it cannot be inferred that a world in which these evil things exist must needs be an unreasonable world. The facts alleged might go to prove that it is a non-moral or immoral world, and hence it might be inferred that it is the work of a non-moral or immoral being—that was the doctrine of Mani; but still they would not prove it to be a world that came, or that could ever have come, by chance. Even if it seemed to have been made for perfectly malignant purposes, its making, and the reason of its making, would still remain to be accounted

for, and would still postulate a cause. Besides, we must not fail to notice that the mere presence of evil in the universe does not prove a malignant purpose, unless it could be shown that evil is the object of the universe. If a man were to say, I have tooth-ache; therefore this is either a wicked world which no good God would create, or an absurd world which requires no God to account for it, you would quickly reply with Paley that although it is unhappily true that teeth ache, and that tooth-ache is a sadly evil thing, yet it is equally certain that teeth were not made for the purpose of aching, but to subserve a necessary and beneficent purpose in the economy of life. A similar argument will apply to all the evils which we find throughout the world. They are incidents—mysterious incidents, indeed—in the economy of the universe, but they are clearly not its aim or end.

We may conclude, then, without further argument, that the constitution of the human mind which makes it impossible for us to conceive of the existence of a finite thing, or of the occurrence of any event, without a cause, compels us to believe in the existence of some Great First Cause of this finite universe and of all its operations. This argument, says Kant, is "the oldest, the clearest, the most in conformity with the common reason of humanity. . . . It is utterly hopeless to attempt to rob it of the authority which it has always enjoyed. The mind will not suffer itself to be depressed by the doubts suggested by subtle speculations. It rises out of its uncertainty the moment it casts a look at the wondrous forms of nature and the majesty of the universe, and it rises from height to height, from condition to condition, till it has

elevated itself to the supreme and unconditioned Author of all." A greater than Kant has sanctioned the cogency of the same argument by declaring that "the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity," as the necessary First Cause of the universe and all that it contains. If we adopt the definition of Aristotle that God is "that on which the world and all nature depend," we might now assume it to be irrational to disbelieve that *God is.*

Here, however, we cannot leave the question of God's being without asking whether He has any being apart from, or independently of the universe of which He is the Cause. Pantheism affirms that God and nature are one, and denies that He has any being either apart from or independently of nature. We go a long way with the affirmation of the Pantheist; but we join the logical agnostic in rejecting his negation. Christian theism does not conceive of creation as a causative act by which the universe was projected from its Creative Cause in such a way as to remain forever after separate from it. There is a Christian pantheism which the researches of science are ever tending to confirm, and which recognizes God as immanent in the universe of which He is the Cause.

We are compelled to recognize that the forces of nature do reside in the objects of nature. There is something in the stone, as well as in the earth, which makes the stone fall to the earth. We call that hidden force the attraction of gravity; but whatever we call it, it is *in* the stone, and *in* the

earth, and in all matter, so evidently that we assume it to belong to the nature of matter. In spite of gravitation, however, we observe that the tree rises upward from the earth, and that the sap of the tree rises upward in the stem, by virtue of a force which manifestly belongs to and exists in every seed of every plant that grows. Just so, there is something in animal life which enables and compels the snail to crawl, the bird to fly, the fish to swim, the man to move himself from place to place, in spite of the law of inertia. If we examine the forces of nature themselves, we find them curiously self-applied and self-changed in their operations. Water, for instance, follows the universal law by which all matter is expanded by heat and contracted by the withdrawal of heat, until it falls to about 40 degrees Fahrenheit; but then it begins to expand again, so that when it reaches 32 degrees, the frozen water floats upon the surface. Clearly enough, the force which first contracts the water, and the force which afterwards expands it, and the mysterious force which stops the one process and starts the other must all reside in the element of water, since they are universally found in it. Without further illustration, I think we may assume that the forces of nature do exist and abide in the objects of nature.

But that is not all. The researches of science have shown that the forces of nature are not only intimately related to each other, but that they are actually convertible into each other. Rub your hands together, and the friction, which is simply arrested motion, converts that motion into heat. Rub a piece of sealing-wax upon your sleeve, and you con-

vert motion into electricity strong enough to attract and hold a piece of paper. Strike a flint and steel together, and you make the sparks fly; that is, you change motion into light as well as heat. The converse is not so easily illustrated, but it is equally true, namely that light, heat, and electricity are returnable again into the form of motion. The inference is clear, and it is this:—that motion, heat, light and electricity are merely different forms of a single force, which is at once simpler and more exquisitely subtle than they. Thus, step by step, does science lead up from the infinite complexity of the forms and forces of nature to the conception of one single simple force which underlies all nature and which causes all the forms of force which we perceive. In organic nature we find much the same thing. Organic nature, from the lowest to the highest, is a world of life, beginning with the cell, if, indeed, it is so much as a cell, of protoplasm, and rising by imperceptible variations of cellular combination, to the form of man himself. In every individual of every species, from its embryotic cell to its full maturity, there is something which, from the first, determines not only what it is, but how it shall develop, and what it shall become. Nay, there is often a prophecy of what the individual never can become, but the species is destined to become, as in the brain of the savage, whose actual life is little above that of the brute, but whose brain is ready for such work as perhaps has never yet been done by any man upon this planet. If the doctrine of evolution, in the largest sense, is true—if it is true that the co-operation and even the apparent conflict of the forces of nature, mechanical and physi-

ological, are jointly modifying the existing forms of life and evolving new forms from them—then what marvellous Somewhat must there not be abiding in the life forms of the world! Truly the researches of science seem to be steadily leading us up to the conviction that the First Cause of the universe continues to abide in it, and is the Immanent Cause of all the forces we discover to be operating in it! Thus far, and even further, we may freely go with pantheism, holding with unhappy Bruno that amid the varying phenomena of nature there is indeed a Power which gives them coherence and intelligibility; and that this Power, which is present through the whole and every part of nature, as the vital principle is present in the whole and every part of a living body, is none other than God.

It is only when the pantheist denies that God has any being independently of nature that we are compelled to join issue with him. We may do so briefly, and on strictly scientific grounds. For science recognizes that the visible universe is a finite universe, which had a definite beginning in time and is going on to a predestined end in time. But the Supreme First Cause of all finite being must Itself be eternal, uncaused, unconditioned, absolute. The Cause on which the universe depends cannot, therefore, be dependent on the universe. It may abide and manifest Itself in the universe, but It cannot be contained in the universe. The Eternal may reveal Itself in time, but time and the things of time cannot limit the Eternal. To say that absolute being is beyond the grasp of human conception does not disprove its possibility or its actuality. It merely shows the limitation

of our understanding. Absolute being is not a whit more incomprehensible than any other sort of being, as we shall presently see; and it is Herbert Spencer who says that "the omnipresence of something which passes comprehension is a belief which the most unsparing criticism leaves unquestionable, or rather makes ever clearer." Thus the steps of an inexorable logic lead up to the certainty of the existence of a Great First Cause of all things, which does not only manifest Itself in nature, but which has, or rather is, infinite and absolute Being in Itself.

II. We now come to our second question, *Quid sit Deus?* that is to say, What is God as to His essential nature? The answer, frankly and unhesitatingly given, is that of the agnostic, namely that we do not know. Mr. Herbert Spencer says with great solemnity that "if science and religion are to be reconciled, the basis of reconciliation must be this deepest, widest, and most certain of all facts—that the Power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable." If that is true, the conflict between science and religion, supposing that there is any such conflict, ought never to have been begun; for religion, or at least the Christian religion, has never ceased to proclaim that "deepest, widest, and most certain of all facts." It was as long ago as in the days of Job that this "first principle" was enunciated by Zophar the Naamathite in these biting words:—"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? He is higher than heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know?'

And yet there is a very pregnant fact to be applied here, namely, that every other fact and force in the universe, considered as to its essence, is as hopelessly inscrutable as the First Cause from which they proceed. Let us hear what Mr. Spencer has to say of that.

Space and time are necessary to our modes of thought concerning all things. We simply cannot, if we would, imagine anything to exist without existing somewhere; and just as little can we imagine anything to happen without happening at some time. But what are time and space? We do not know. "Time and space," says Herbert Spencer, "are wholly incomprehensible. The immediate knowledge which we seem to have of them, proves, when examined, to be total ignorance."

Matter, one would think, must be intelligible to beings who inhabit a material universe and who are clothed with a material body; but is it so? "Matter," says Mr. Spencer, "in its ultimate nature, is as absolutely incomprehensible as space and time."

At least we ought to know what motion is, since it belongs to our dignity as animals that we have the power to move ourselves from place to place. But no; Mr. Spencer again declares that we are ignorant even of that. "Neither when considered in connection with space," he says, "nor when considered in connection with matter, nor when considered in connection with rest, do we find that motion is truly cognizable. All efforts to understand its essential nature do but bring us to alternative impossibilities of thought."

Let us go one step further back, and inquire what force is.

Surely a man can tell what it is that knocks him down. Not at all. "It is impossible," says Spencer, "to form any idea of force in itself, and equally impossible to comprehend its mode of existence."

It is needless to multiply these significant admissions. Two or three sentences more will suffice to sum up the whole matter, and those sentences I shall take from Mr. Spencer: "The conviction that human intelligence is incapable of absolute knowledge is one that has been slowly gaining ground as civilization has advanced." "Ultimate Scientific Ideas are all representative of realities that cannot be comprehended. After no matter how great a progress in the colligation of facts and the establishment of generalizations ever wider and wider . . . . the fundamental truth remains as much beyond our reach as ever. To the man of science . . . . objective and subjective things are alike inscrutable in their substance and genesis. . . . . He realizes with special vividness the utter incomprehensibility of the simplest fact considered in itself. He, more than any other, knows that in its ultimate essence nothing can be known."

You see, then, that the fundamental proposition of agnosticism, as enunciated by its greatest expositor, does not apply to the being of God only, but is applicable, in precisely the same way, to every fact and force in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and in the water under the earth. When Mr. Spencer declares with fit solemnity that the "Power which the universe manifests is utterly inscrutable," it is to be regretted that he does not say at once, as he does say

afterwards, that everything else in the universe is equally, and in precisely the same sense, inscrutable. If he had said so, he would not have misled an inconsiderate world, and himself with it, perhaps, by drawing an inference from the former proposition which he certainly does not draw from the latter.

For that is precisely what he and the whole school of agnostics have unwittingly done. Their argument, fairly stated is this: "The Power which the universe manifests (call it God if you will) is utterly inscrutable; it follows, therefore, that it is unknowable, and if it is unknowable, you will but waste time in trying to learn that which can never be known." Now I ask you to consider whether the agnostic ever dreams of applying the same argument to any other fact than that of the First Cause of all facts and phenomena. Let us see how it would sound in another connection to which it applies equally well, as thus:—Matter and force are utterly inscrutable; it follows that they are unknowable; but if they are unknowable, it is a waste of time to study that which cannot be known; therefore scientific study is a busy idleness, which leads to nothing better than laborious ignorance!

Put the case in that way, and the agnostic would be swift to lay his finger on the fallacy. He would tell you at once that you were using the word inscrutable in a double sense, and that though a thing may be inscrutable as to its essential nature, its operations and relations may still be perfectly and advantageously observable. Thus he might point you to the immense number of facts which we have discovered

concerning matter, though the essential nature of matter in itself remains, and must ever remain, inscrutable and unknowable. Or he might point you to our knowledge of motion, heat, light and electricity, the essential nature of which is confessedly inscrutable, but which are so perfectly observable that we are enabled, by observing them, to predicate not only their reciprocal convertibility, but the existence of another force, subtler than any of them, which thus far has eluded observation.

Now, I ask you in all reasonableness why the same distinction does not apply to the study of God? Let us admit, as we do, that the essential nature of God in Himself is inscrutble and therefore unknowable; but does it follow that we can know nothing *about* God? I trow not. If we can discover any thing that God does, or has ever caused to be done, that alone is to learn something concerning Him; and rightly reasoned out, it ought to furnish us the means of learning more concerning Him. Though the question *Quid sit Deus* must remain forever without answer, there remains another question which is not unanswerable in the same sense, or in the same degree. That question is, *Qualis sit Deus*, or What may we know concerning the nature of God?

III. I submit to you that in the observations which we have already made, we have discovered quite stupendous truths concerning the nature of God. Let us glance backwards and reconsider.

Surely it is something to have discovered that, unless all human reason is essentially unreasonable, God is, and that

He is an absolute Being, dependent upon no other being; that He is beyond all conditions of space or time, or, in other words, that He is infinite and eternal; that He is nevertheless revealed in a finite universe; that He is the Cause of all the facts, forces and phenomena of nature, and consequently that He must be of inconceivable power. We have learned that the universe of which He is the sole Cause is a universe of all-pervading law, that is to say, of all-pervading reason; so that unless reason can proceed from unreason, the First Cause of this reasonable universe must be a reasonable Being. Further still we may go. We ourselves, as part of the universe, owe our being and our faculties to the First Cause from which they have proceeded. Life as well as reason must therefore have proceeded and come forth from God, so that unless life can come from lifelessness—an hypothesis contradicted by every trustworthy experiment—the eternal Source of life must be a living God. I submit to you that these truths, which are as certain as any other truths that reason can discover, are enough to set aside the fallacy of the agnostic. Let it be granted without the slightest hesitation that "in its ultimate essence, nothing can be known," and still the fact remains that we can learn by observation a virtual infinitude of facts concerning the essentially inscrutable elements of nature. In like manner, we need not hesitate to concede that "the Power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable"; and yet it appears that we can learn at least these things concerning It?—that It is a living and reasonable and eternal Being of inconceivable power; and that this Being has been

manifested at least to that extent in the visible creation of which It is the First and only Original Cause. Perhaps, if we now return to the beginning and prosecute our inquiry from another point of acknowledged scientific truth, we may hope to learn more concerning the same eternally inscrutable Being.

In our second lecture I quoted the following sentences form Mr. Spencer: "The Manifestations of force occurring either in ourselves or outside of ourselves, do not persist; but that which does persist is the Unknown Cause of these manifestations. In other words, asserting the persistence of force is but another mode of asserting an Unconditioned Reality, without beginning or end." Now, according to the theory of evolution, as stated by Mr. Spencer, the universe first appeared as an undifferentiated chaos. If we admit this assumption or hypothesis, for it is nothing else and nothing more, there must have been a time when the forces now operating in the universe were introduced into chaos; and it is conceded that they must have had their origin in the Unconditioned Reality which is the acknowledged Source of all forces. How, then, was the creative act, for so it must be called, by which those forces were introduced into chaos, brought about? Since the Creative Power is acknowledged to have been "unconditioned," it could not be constrained by any other power or cause whatsoever. It must therefore have been freely self-moved to that act and to all its acts. But an act of free self-movement or self-determination is an act of will; and indeed the only way in which force is ever experimentally known to be originated in this world is

through an exercise of power determined by an act of will. Consequently, the Creative Power must be a self-moved, self-determined, or in one word, a voluntary Being. It is one of the curious phenomena of intellectual eccentricity that in this connection men have argued that the Creative Will is an unconscious Will. Thus Hartmann goes so far as to say that although there is an universal Will to which all phenomena must be referred, and although he maintains that it is an intelligent Will, yet he insists that it is also an unconscious Will. I frankly confess that I do not consider such a proposition worthy of discussion; for I submit to you that the exercise of an intelligent will, or, in other words, an intelligent act of choice, without consciousness of that act, is not only inconceivable but impossible.

Let us now ask ourselves whether the Unconditioned Reality, which we find to be intelligently and voluntarily energetic, is also a moral Being. From the teaching of Mr. Spencer alone one might certainly hope so, since he says that the arrangement of the universe is such that the right has an immense advantage in the struggle for existence. But Matthew Arnold goes much further. In view of all that science has discovered and that history has disclosed, he declares it to be a verifiable fact that in the government of the world there is an Eternal (Power)—and there can be only One such Power—that makes for righteousness; so that the man or the people that would be well in any best sense must love righteousness and hate iniquity. If this be true, and it is denied only by a few extreme pessimists, the Eternal Power must be a moral Being; and I know not how an in-

telligent, voluntary and moral being shall be other than a personal being. How intelligence, will and morality can exist without personality, I, for my part, cannot conceive. It is true that Matthew Arnold used many a jibe of a scholastic sort at the words "thinking" and "loving" as applied to the Eternal. He had a fair provocation to do so in the careless use of those words by other men of lesser eminence than he; but after all, "thinking," and "loving," when so applied, are meant only to suggest the intelligence and benevolence of God. No one pretends that our little brain-swirls and nerve-swirls are, or can be, anything more than suggestions of the sublime intelligence and love of the Eternal. That indubitable truth Mr. Arnold was never weary of expounding; but he would surely have done well to expound the complementary truth that the bare existence of our own moral and intellectual natures, imperfect as they are, implies and postulates an infinite Reality of Wisdom and Goodness in the Eternal Source from which they come.

It would surely be a significant fact if it should appear that the doctrine of God which is thus logically inferred from strictly scientific premises, should be found, as far as it goes, to be the doctrine of the Nicene Creed. If that should prove to be the case, I submit to you (*a*) that there must be some other than the scientific and inductive method of arriving at truth, since nothing is more certain than this, that the Nicene doctrine of God was neither grounded on scientific observations nor established by induction. If we should find that the Nicene Creed makes further state-

ments concerning God to which the facts of science have not originally led, but which perfectly accord with every known fact of science, I submit to you (*b*) that there will now be a strong *à priori* probability of the truth of those further statements. And if we then find that the theology of the Nicene Creed, taken merely as a scientific hypothesis, answers that purpose for all the facts of science as perfectly as the hypothesis of evolution answers for a portion of them, and covers every unfilled gap in the evolutionary hypothesis, I submit to you (*c*) that, on strictly scientific grounds, the theology of the Nicene Creed would stand incomparably better established than the partial theory of evolution. It is to these points that I now ask your attention; and the first thing to be done is simply to inquire what the Nicene Creed does actually assert concerning God.

Beyond all question, the Nicene Creed asserts the doctrine of a perfect Trinity existing from eternity in the Divine Being, that is to say a Trinity of consciously distinct Persons abiding in one perfect and indivisible unity. I know that this is often supposed to be a contradiction in terms. I hope to be able to show you that it is neither a contradiction, nor a parodox; that, if we consider it *à priori*, it is eminently probable; and that considered *à posteriori*, it makes the theology of the Nicene Creed identical with the theology of science and induction, that is, to the extent to which science and induction can establish a theology.

I suppose it will be admitted that if all the works of an author are found to have some universal characteristic, it is

logical to infer that the original of that characteristic must exist in that author; and if it is true that the works of nature are not works thrown off and abandoned by the Divine Author of nature, but works in which He is pleased to abide, then it is logical to infer that any universal characteristic of nature must be characteristic of the Author of nature. Now, in nature, and in every part of it, we discover a trinity of substance, form and force. We can conceive of nothing, and certainly we know of nothing in the universe, which does not exist substantially. We can conceive of no substance, and we know none, which has not some form. We can conceive of nothing, and we know nothing, which has not qualities of some sort, or, in other words, which does not exert some sort of force. This is true of the universe at large; it is equally true of every atom in the universe; and it is as true of organic nature as of the nature which we call inorganic. The atom which no miscroscope has ever yet enabled man to see must have substance, form and force as surely as the greatest sun that gems the firmament; and from the protoplastic cell up to man himself there is some substantial reality which determines the form and controls the vital forces of every living creature.

The best single thing that I have been able to think of as an illustration of this universal truth is the common horse-shoe magnet. Its substance is magnetic iron; but all magnetic iron does not exist in the form of a horse-shoe. It might exist, and does exist, in any number of forms; it cannot exist without some form. Yet, whatever the form may be, the form is there because the substance is there. After

we have seen a thing we may picture its form in our minds without thinking of any substance in connection with it; but we cannot imagine the real objective existence of a form without some substance of which it is the form. It appears, then, that substance and form go together; that there can be no real form apart from substance; and that there can be no substance without a form. Yet, while form and substance are inseparable, the form is not the substance, and the substance, whatever it may be, is not the form. Moreover, in the order of reality, as well as in the order of thought, the form is of the substance, or, in other words, the form exists because the substance exists, and not contrariwise the substance because of the form. In the inorganic world, we often find that the nature of the substance determines its form; in organic nature it is invariably so. In a living body, of whateve order, it is not the body, but the inscrutable living somewhat, other than the body, which determines the bodily form and governs all changes of form; but neither in organic nor in inorganic nature does the form determine the nature of the substance.

Moreover, wherever we find substance and form, there we find force. In the horse-shoe magnet the particular force which is most remarkable is magnetic force. Here again, we find that the force and the substance are inseparable; there is no substance apart from force, nor can we conceive of force apart from substance. Yet, as before, the force is not the substance, and the substance is not the force. And, as before, the force is of the substance, that is to say, the force exists because the substance exists, and

not contrariwise, the substance because of the force. There is magnetic force because there is a horse-shoe magnet, and not contrariwise a horse-shoe magnet because there is a magnetic force.

Now, in every object, animate and inanimate, known to man, and in any mode of being conceivable to man, there are these three things: substance, form and force. No one of the three is, or is convertible into, either of the others. Each is different from each of the others. Each is necessary to the others. No one of them is separable from the others. Each and all of these three are necessary to the reality and unity of any being, animate or inanimate, in the universe. Would it be absurd, then, to infer that these three must, in some supreme sense, belong to all being? I think not. I think it reasonable to believe that a law of being which demonstrably and verifiably exists in all known being must have its very root in the inscrutable Being which is the Source of all the being that we know. But if it were so, even in Supreme Being, then there would be something more than we have seen in our poor illustration of the horse-shoe magnet. For Supreme Being must surely be conscious being, and supremely conscious being. If our horse-shoe magnet were fully conscious of the three distinct realities which are indissolubly united in its being, the substance of it would be conscious of itself; the form would be conscious of itself; and the indwelling force would be conscious of itself. Each would be conscious of its unity with the others, and of its difference from the others. Thus there would be the consciousness of an in-

separable unity, together with that reality and consciousness of difference, which is distinctive of personality. Unless, then, the Divine Source of all being is less than perfect created being would be, if it were endowed with perfect consciousness, we must conclude that in God there is a Divine and consciously Substantial Being, of which, and in unity with which, there is a conscious Divine Form, and also a conscious Divine Power.

Here again, however, we may learn something more from our horse-shoe magnet. Bring the positive pole of the magnet near to a needle, but without touching the needle, and what happens? The needle springs to the magnet. That is what seems to happen; but what really does happen is that the magnetic force of the iron proceeds from the iron to the needle, and draws it to the magnet. Yet the force which thus proceeds from the magnet continues to abide in it in all its fulness. Use your magnet as often as you please—keep it, if you please, in continual use—and its power is none the less. While proceeding from the magnet, that power continues to abide there, and abides there undiminished. It may spend itself forever, and yet it will remain forever unspent. What we can see so plainly with our eyes in the operation of the magnet is as really true of every atom in the universe. If, then, we may learn anything whatever of the source of all being from the universal facts of all the being that is known to us, what can we infer but that The Divine Being, without change of Its Divine and Eternal Nature, may nevertheless send forth Its Power, so to speak, from Itself, while that Power shall

abide unchanged and undiminished within Itself? Thus It may exhibit Its Power immanent and operative in the forces of innumerable worlds and of countless creatures in every world, while that same sublime Power remains whole and undiminished in the Divine Being, and forever inscrutable to every creature.

Is this, then, what is meant by the doctrine of the Trinity as stated in the Nicene Creed? I shall ask you to examine the Creed itself to find an answer. Only, you must recollect that in the Creed the word "Son," as I have said in the last lecture, is a symbolic word, not a word of scientific definition. It is not only the best word that could be chosen; it is the word our Saviour chose to declare His personal relation to the Father. But even He, when speaking of eternal facts, could use no other than the language of time, which is the language of imperfect symbol. As to His eternal Nature, the Creed asserts that He was "begotten of the Father before all worlds;" not, however, by an *act* of generation, for an act of generation would be a temporal act; but by virtue of an eternal relation, like that of form to substance. St. Paul uses that very language when he says that the eternal Son of God was "in the form of God," and therefore "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." St. John, adopting the Platonic language of his time, said, "In the beginning was the Word (Logos, *i. e.*, Word or Reason) and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The difference between the expressions of the two Apostles is a difference of phrase only, since a word is the manifested form of an idea, as reason is the in-

tellectual form of wisdom. Here, however, we must distinguish between form in the sense of mere shape and the far more significant sense in which it is used by St. Paul. The form of a crystal, for example, is much more than shape; it is at once a determinate and necessary consequence of the nature of the substance of which it is composed and the medium through which that substance is related to all other substances. In the world of life we may perceive the same truth even more manifestly; for in every living creature there is some inscrutable vital entity which determines its bodily form, and yet the bodily form of the living entity is not merely a visible shape, but also, and much more, an organism by which the creature is mediately related to the rest of nature. So the personal and divine Form of God is not to be conceived as merely subsisting in an eternal relation to the divine Essence of which it is begotten, but also as the only and necessary mediator between God and all that is not God. The Psalmist may have spoken more and better than he knew when he said, "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the Breath of His mouth." When the creative act was done which brought a cosmos out of chaos, the Mediating Agent of the Maker of all things visible and invisible was the Eternal Word; the Creative Power was the Eternal Spirit. From then till now the Mediating Agent is the same, the Word of God, the Reason that appears in nature and its marvellously reasonable processes; the Eternal Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father, yet abideth ever in the Father, is the Power exhibited in all phenomena of force and life.

That is the doctrine of the Nicene Creed concerning God. That is the meaning of the sublime declaration: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, by Whom all things are made; and in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the Life-Giver, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified."

More than once I may have seemed to you to undervalue the teleological argument, that is, the argument from design, which is sometimes called "the carpenter theory." I do not at all undervalue it; to do so would be to undervalue the argument of the Psalmist when he says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth His handiwork." But the teleological argument proves nothing more than a Creator of finite things, and therefore it cannot prove an infinite Creator. It falls far short of what we need. Moreover, it has generally been used after the manner of the deists, that is, to prove the being of a God beyond nature, who, having once for all made the universe, has cast it off to go its way under the necessity of arbitrary laws. So used, the teleological argument may be worse than useless; it may be almost mischievous. At best, the conception of God as a Contriver is a make-shift. As Principal Caird has admirably said, "Our admiration of the power and skill of a human designer is enhanced by the supposed intractableness of the materials

with which he works; but when the Divine Designer is conceived of as Himself the creator of these materials, He must, according to this anthropomorphic notion, be Himself responsible for that original intractableness which He is supposed afterwards to manifest His skill in overcoming. Where difficulties are of one's own creating, no credit for wisdom can be due to the act which evades or vanquishes them. . . . . The form of thought, therefore, under which we are forced to conceive of this designer is, at best, that of an agent who comes in with a second idea, or a subsequently struck-out device, not present to him in his original or creative thought; of one who improves upon or corrects his first conception. Finally, though by the supplementary notion of Providence, we get rid of the limitation in the case of human contrivers, viz., that their thought and power cease to be in or with their work as soon as they have finished its construction and surrendered it to the keeping of the ordinary laws of nature, yet this device does not wholly purge the primary idea of its finitude. The Providence that comes in to sustain the mechanism which the Divine Contriver has completed is something outside of that mechanism itself, and therefore limited by it. The work has a definite nature of its own, apart from the power that merely props it up or keeps it going. As we cannot think of the Divine Contriver as going on perpetually recreating the same work, but must think of the completed work as having a particular character and form of its own which He has merely to sustain, it is obvious that there must be something in the work which lies outside of or apart from Him."

But to continue in the language of the same admirable writer, "There is, indeed, another kind of teleology—what may be designated as inner or essential teleology—to which the foregoing objections are not applicable, and of which we have an example in the animal organism. The thought or design which is at work in the growth and development of organized structures is not a mere mechanical power or cunning acting from without—shaping, adjusting, putting together materials prepared to its hand, constructing them according to an ingenious plan, after the manner of a maker of machines. Here, on the contrary, the idea or formative power goes with the matter and constitutes the very indwelling essence of the thing. Instead of coming in as an afterthought, to give to existing materials a new use and purpose not included or presupposed in their own original nature, the idea or design is present from the very beginning, inspiring the first minute atom or cell with the power of the perfect whole that it is to be. Nor, for the building up and completing of the structure, is there any call for the interposition of external agency. From first to last it is self-formative, self-developing; the life within resists all merely outward interference, and subordinates all outward conditions to its own development. In this case, therefore, we do not need to go beyond or outside of the thing itself in seeking for the explanation of it. The thought or reason that explains it is within itself, nay, *is* its very self; so that to perceive or know the thing at all, is to perceive or know the reason and ground of its existence. Nor, lastly, can we here sep-

arate the notions of existence and preservation—the nature of the thing, and the providence that keeps it up—so as to make the one a limit to the other. The idea, or active formative thought, in which an organism lives, needs no second or foreign idea to preserve or sustain it. It is, in a certain sense, its own providence. The continuous existence of the organism lies in the perpetual activity of the vital principle, which is, so to speak, ever re-creating it, ever engaged in that process of continuous self-differentiation and integration, the cessation of which would be the extinction of its very existence.

"Now, if it were possible to extend this teleological idea to the whole finite world, we should be able to see in the world the manifestation of a kind of design to which the objections urged against the ordinary design argument would no longer be applicable; for what we should then have before us would be one vast, self-consistent system, one organic whole, one self-evolving, self-realizing idea, infusing the lucidity of reason into all things, potentially present in the lowest order of existences, slowly advancing itself, without cleft or arbitrary leap, from lower to higher; so that the lower, though not the cause, would be the presupposition and the unconscious prophecy of the higher, the higher the explanation of the lower, and the highest of all that in which the meaning, end, or aim of the whole would be clearly seen. Such a teleological view of the world would not involve a representation of Divine Intelligence as an arbitrary agency brought in from without to fill up gaps or improve on its original products, nor as a

power acting in different isolated capacities—now as creator, now as contriver, now as sustainer—but as the inward life and reason of all things, anticipating and foreshadowing the end from the beginning, and moving onwards in its own continuous, self-conditioned process to an end which itself determines."

That, certainly as I conceive it, is the teleology of the Nicene Creed, the teleology of St. Paul, when he says that "by Him Who is the Image of the invisible God, all things subsist," so that "we live and move and have our being" in God, immanent in the universe He has brought into existence, and in which the glory of His presence and abiding Power is manifestly revealed.

In nature, so conceived, there are no gaps to be filled up such as are left wide open by the theory of evolution. Evolution assumes an original undifferentiated chaos—an hypothesis which is simply unthinkable. Evolution can give no account of the origin of the undifferentiated chaos, nor of the entrance of force into it. After admitting the introduction of mechanical force to have been necessary to the change of chaos into cosmos, evolution can give no account of the incoming of life-force. Admitting life-force, it has no account to render of consciousness, still less of reason. Thus, if we admit the hypothesis of evolution—and I know of no Christian ground on which we need hesitate to do so—we have covered only one domain of the universe with a reasonable and consistent theory. The theology of the Nicene Creed is perfectly consistent with the theory of evolution, accounts for all its facts, and fills every

gap between them. Moreover, the theology of the Nicene Creed makes no demand upon the reason which an evolutionist like Mr. Spencer does not admit to be logically justified. Mr. Spencer's main contention is that the existence of the universe shows the being of an eternal Reality to be "the most certain of all things," because, without such a Reality, he cannot intellectually bridge the gap betwen orig-ginal chaos and the existing cosmos. The Nicene theology bridges every other apparent gap in the continuity of nature in precisely the same way, by recognizing the operation of precisely the same Supreme Power, and by its doctrine of that Power it clears every difficulty of belief so simply that its faith becomes a lofty exercise of reason. The God of Deism is inadequate to the intellectual requirements of this age. The impersonal God of Pantheism existing only in finite nature utterly fails to explain the origin of Nature. The Triune God of the Nicene Creed, in Whom we live and move and have our being, is the only God in Whom modern science leaves it possible to believe ; and, to completeness even of scientific thought, that Triune God is indispensable.

In conclusion, I beg you to remember that the statements of the Nicene Creed were not founded on scientific observations and inductions, but on the authority of Jesus Christ. Now, after the lapse of fifteen hundred years, those statements, so far as they have been tested by the scientific and inductive method, are found not only to bear the test, but to supply the links of continuity which science owns her inability to forge in framing a rational theory of the

cosmos. I ask you, then, whether we are not entitled to claim that the authority of Jesus Christ, and not only the Nicene theology, is confirmed and established by science, in those particulars in which the witness of science is available? I ask you whether we are not entitled to claim that in the authority of Jesus Christ we have a source of truth beyond that which is appropriate to scientific studies? I ask you whether there is not an overwhelming probability that any further statements made by Him, or by His authority, are as true as those which, after nineteen hundred and fifty years, are found to stand the tests of a science which had not been born when Jesus Christ lived among men? Since we find not only that science itself postulates a God, but that the God Whom science postulates is the God declared by Jesus Christ, I ask you whether the question, What is Christ? is not far more than likely to find its true answer in the account which Christ gave of Himself?

LECTURE VI.

CONCLUSION.

LECTURE VI.

CONCLUSION.

DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISM LEAVES THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES UNMOVED. THE HIGHEST CRITICISM. THE SELF-EVIDENCE OF CHRIST. INCARNATION. MIRACLE. THE SUPREME VERIFICATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.—JOHN xiv. 9.

If there is one fact recorded in Scripture which is entitled in the fullest sense of the word to the name of a miracle, the resurrection of Christ is that fact. Here, at least, is an instance in which the entire Christian faith must stand or fall with our belief in the supernatural.—DEAN MANSEL.

The fact that Christ appeared as a worker of miracles is the best attested fact in his whole biography, both by the absolute unanimity of all the witnesses and by countless other confirmations of circumstances not likely to have been invented, striking sayings connected with them, etc. —ECCE HOMO.

Miracles are, in themselves, extremely improbable things, and cannot be admitted unless supported by a great concurrence of evidence. For some of the evangelical miracles there is a concurrence of evidence, which, when fairly considered, is very great indeed; for example, for the resurrection, for the appearance of Christ to St. Paul, for the general fact that Christ was a miraculous Healer of disease. The evidence by which these facts are supported cannot be tolerably accounted for by any hypothesis except that of their being true. And if they are once admitted, the antecedent improbability of many miracles less strongly attested is much diminished.—IBID.

Whoever would deny the presence of the divine power in human history must first reduce the Character of Jesus of Nazareth to the level of the possibilities of human nature. He is Himself the greatest of His miracles.—NEWMAN SMYTH.

It takes a Newton to forge a Newton. What man could have fabricated Jesus? None but Jesus.—THEODORE PARKER.

The facts of religious feeling are to me as certain as the facts of physics. . . . . No atheistic reasoning can, I hold, dislodge religion from the heart of man. . . . . As an experience of consciousness, it is perfectly beyond the assaults of logic.—TYNDALL.

It should not be forgotten that opinions have a moral side to them.—SIR JAMES STEPHEN.

Feeling and conscience are more than helps to logic in finding truth. They are themselves organs for the discovery of truth.—CAIRD.

We may question the decisions of the intellect, but it is at our peril that we tamper with the verdict of the heart.—ROBERTSON.

The teaching of Jesus carried morality to the sublimest point attained, or even attainable, by humanity. . . . . He presented the rare spectacle of a life, so far as we can estimate it, uniformly noble and consistent with His own lofty principles, so that the imitation of Christ has become almost the final word in the preaching of His religion, and must continue to be one of the most powerful elements of its permanence. —SUPERNATURAL RELIGION.

Thou didst cry unto me from afar, and I heard Thee even as the heart heareth; and there was no more place left for doubt.—ST. AUGUSTINE.

Let all the doctors hold their peace; speak Thou alone to me.—ST. THOMAS À KEMPIS.

We may admit that there are notions, ideas, beliefs, which cannot be deduced syllogistically, which the logic of the understanding cannot justify, and yet maintain that by a profounder logic, which enters into the genesis, and traces the secret rhythm and evolution of thought, they can be shown to rise out of, and be affiliated to, other ideas, and to form constituent elements in that living process of which all truth consists.—CAIRD.

IN the previous lecture I endeavored to show that the evidences of Christianity would be made only clearer, and that its sublimest truths would receive nothing but confirmation, if we should frankly admit the ascertained facts of physical science and apply to them the same methods of logical scru-

tiny which are used by reasoners in all departments of scientific research. In the present lecture I must glance far more rapidly than I could wish at several points which seem to me to be of great importance; but first of all I desire briefly to show you that, if we should deal with the most destructive criticism of the Holy Scriptures in the same open and candid way in which we have tried to deal with scientific difficulties, Christianity would receive no damage.

I have already shown, conclusively, as I think, that the Christian religion is committed to no theory whatever of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and to no critical theory of their date, their authorship, or their composition. If that is true, then it follows that no facts which criticism has established, or ever can establish, can be inconsistent with the truth of Christianity. Yet the value of documentary evidence of the origin of Christianity, contemporary with its first propagation as a revealed religion, is by no means slight; and it is satisfactory to know that the most destructive criticism which has ever been applied to the contents of the New Testament leaves four important documents unimpeached. No one denies that St. Paul's epistles to the Romans, his two epistles to the Corinthians, and his epistle to the Galatians, are authentic letters of their reputed author; and the contents of those letters tell us who their author was, when and to whom he wrote, the doctrine that he taught and the grounds on which he rested his own belief in that doctrine and appealed to others to believe it. Let us examine these points very briefly.

The writer of these letters was undoubtedly a Jew of great

learning, educated in the strictest Judaism, and zealous in its defence. He was a contemporary of our Lord, and probably of nearly the same age as He. It does not appear that he had ever personally met or heard our Saviour; but it is perfectly certain that he had known the fact of our Lord's death at, or soon after, the time of its occurrence, and it is not less certain that, about the same time, he must have heard the testimony of some of the disciples to the fact of His resurrection. He did not believe their testimony, but rejected it with such zeal as to be chosen by the Jewish authorities to proceed to Damascus to crush the Christian sect which had appeared even there at a very early date. How much of the Gospel story Saul may have heard before he set out to Damascus we do not know. It is probable that he had heard much more of it than is commonly supposed; because the story itself was public and notorious; because it is altogether improbable that a learned man like Saul would undertake to suppress a sect of his countrymen without informing himself of its tenets; and also because such knowledge would account in a large measure for the apparent suddenness of his conversion. As he went on his persecuting mission, revolving, doubtless, all that he had heard, it is not impossible nor improbable that the mingled pathos and majesty of the life and death of Christ may have moved his heart and troubled his mind; it is neither impossible nor improbable that he may have thought that such a life and such a death were not unworthy of a Son of God; it is more than likely that he may have inwardly revolted from the work of persecuting the followers of such a Man; there is reason to

believe that he found it "hard to kick against the pricks" of an uneasy conscience; yet he continued steadfast in his purpose until, as he continued to believe to his life's end, the crucified, dead and buried Jesus Himself appeared to him. Accepting this supreme proof that Jesus still lived, and that He must therefore be all that He professed to be, Saul became a member of the sect which he had persecuted, and was baptized in the Name which he thenceforth honored above every other name. Presently he received what he held to be a call to preach the Gospel and went down into Arabia to prepare himself for that great work. Three years he abode there and at Damascus, studying that profound system of thought of which we have the outlines in his extant epistles. Then he visited Jerusalem and spent fifteen days with the Apostle Peter, only to find that their Gospel was the same. Fourteen years passed before he went again to Jerusalem to attend the council which was held to settle the question of the obligation of the law of Moses on Gentile converts; and then again, fearing that in any respect he might have been preaching vain doctrine, he privately communicated to the heads of the Church at Jerusalem the Gospel he had preached among the Gentiles. Again he found that his Gospel and theirs were one and the same. He who had seen Christ but once, and then in so unusual a way that he might conceivably have been deceived, had the satisfaction to know that many other men who had gone in and out with Jesus all the time of His earthly life, who had heard His words and been witnesses of His works, who had seen and conversed with Him many times after His death and

burial, were ready to go to prison, to torture and to a convict's death maintaining the reality of the great fact of His resurrection, of which Paul, too, was a witness. Paul's Gospel and theirs, wherever it had been preached, was substantially the same Gospel. Whether at Jerusalem, the Holy City of Israel, or at Rome, the capital of the civilized world, or at Corinth, the mercantile emporium of the East and the West, or in the obscure districts of the rural province of Galatia, one and the same truth of Christ had been taught and believed on the faith of one and the same evidence of its truth.

So much may be learned from the Epistle to the Galatians alone; and from that epistle and the three others now under consideration we may learn the character of the persons to whom these letters were addressed. They were both Jews and Gentiles, and therefore included both classes of those to whom the Gospel was to be commended, and by whom it was to be investigated.

In the Jews it had to encounter a vehemence of opposition of which Paul could not complain, since he himself had been a persecutor. It is true that he commended the Gospel to them as the rich fulfilment of all that Moses and the prophets had taught and foretold; but at the same time he told them that the Mosaic law which they regarded with superstitious reverence had been superseded; and he called upon them to abandon at once and forever that national caste system which has been the pride and strength of Israel throughout all ages. His own example showed that to embrace the Gospel would be to cut themselves off from the authorities of

their religion, and to become outcasts from their kindred. It was not in human nature to make such sacrifices for slight reasons, nor without indubitable proofs of the rightfulness of the claims of a Messiah whom no one denied to have been crucified as a malefactor, but of whom they had no personal knowledge. Now, it was no great task for a Jew at that time to ascertain the truth. All of these four epistles date within twenty-five years of the death of Christ; and the chief witnesses of the resurrection had been accessible for a quarter of a century, and were still accessible to any of the many Jews who were constantly resorting to Jerusalem. It can hardly be doubted, therefore, that many Jewish converts must have consulted those witnesses before they consented to accept a Gospel which entailed such sacrifices.

The Gentiles to whom the Gospel was offered could not be expected to be less exacting in their demand for sufficient evidence of its truth. It required them to surrender the liberty of conduct which all forms of heathenism allowed them to indulge without scruple; to ally themselves with a people which was everywhere detested and despised; to become the devotees and worshippers of a crucified malefactor. Doubtless, then, as always, the sweet story of the Gospel so moved men's hearts as to win their love and faith without external evidence; but it would be too much to believe that keen-witted Greeks and sober Romans would renounce the right to see and question the witnesses of so stupendous a fact as that of an alleged resurrection from the dead.

Now, as these letters more than sufficiently prove, that allegation was the sole ground on which St. Paul claimed

the faith of any man. If it was not true that Christ had risen from the dead, he did not hesitate to say that the whole Gospel was a delusion, and worse than a delusion, since, in that case, Paul himself and all the other apostles who had "testified of God that He had raised up Christ," would be proved to be "false witnesses of God." On the single fact of the resurrection St. Paul openly and unequivocally staked, not only honor and all else that makes life dear, but life itself, and, what was more than any man's life, the whole truth of the Christian religion.

On the faith of what testimony did he stake his life and honor here and his eternal salvation hereafter? What evidence did he offer to others to unite with him in so complete an act of faith and trust? He tells the Corinthian Christians plainly, what his Gospel had been and the grounds on which it rested. He says: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the most part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen of James; then of the Apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." There are the witnesses: nearly five hundred living persons, not including Paul himself, many of whom were easily accessible at the time when these letters were written, and who continued to be still accessible for many years more. It is simply incred-

ible that these witnesses should not have been frequently and closely questioned. There is not a particle of reason to doubt that St. Paul himself had seen and intimately conversed with many of the most important of them, as he declares that he did. It is absolutely certain that their testimony was convincing to him. It is just as certain that they believed their own witness, and that, like him, they had staked their life, their honor, all that makes the world enjoyable, and all that makes death hopeful, on their faith in the reality of the great fact of the resurrection of which they declared, in the face of imprisonment, torture and death, that they themselves were personal witnesses.

I beg you to observe that I am not now arguing the sufficiency of this evidence. That is a subject by itself, and I know no one who has argued it more powerfully, or more convincingly, notwithstanding the fact that some part of his argument may require restatement, than Archdeacon Paley. But what I am now endeavoring to show is that, if we had no part of the New Testament to depend on but these four epistles of St. Paul, or in other words, if we were to admit the most extreme assertions of the most destructive critics, who all leave us these four epistles, we should still have contemporary and documentary evidence of the foundation of the Christian Church, of its substantial faith, and of the ground on which that faith was proclaimed and received. In those epistles we find nearly all the great truths of Christianity incidentally recorded and most of them powerfully expounded. The doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is simply but suffi-

ciently stated; and the doctrine of the Church, as the Body of Christ, united through Him with the Eternal Father, inspired by the Eternal Spirit, and by Its holy inspiration guide into all truth and all forms of goodness, is proclaimed, or rather assumed, with a simplicity which requires no exposition. I do not believe that any criticism will ever reduce the Christian documents of the apostolic age to these four epistles. I believe that further and more searching criticism will establish the authenticity and the substantial accuracy of all the Books of the New Testament; yet I find a certain satisfaction in the fact that if we should agree to disregard them altogether, the substance and the evidence of the Christian Faith would remain precisely what they were before the youthful science of biblical criticism was thought of.

In point of fact the whole tendency of criticism at this time is to admit the Gospels and many of the epistles to be of a far earlier date than former critics supposed; but here again, so far as the Christian evidences are concerned, we are under no necessity to press that point. On the contrary, if we should admit that the Gospels and the epistles, with the exception of the four which are conceded to be authentic, were all of later dates, following each other from the close of the first to the close of the second century, we should still find in them the strongest conceivable evidence that the Christian faith had continued throughout that period to be the same faith which St. Paul taught and which all the other apostles of Christ taught, from the beginning. What the Christian faith was in the third century is easily ascertained from other authentic sources. What it was de-

clared to be by the common voice of Christendom in the beginning of the fourth century we have already seen; and thus, if we were so rash as to accept the most extreme opinions of destructive critics of the New Testament as ascertained certainties, we should only establish a new and irrefragable historical proof of the continuous identity of the Christian religion with the religion which St. Paul and all the Apostles delivered on the sure ground of the resurrection of our Lord, of which they were personal witnesses. I would gladly pursue this theme if time allowed; but time presses, and I must press on to another point.

There is no reason why any Christian soul should dread the most searching criticism of the Holy Scriptures; and indeed it seems to me that to dread any veracious investigation of them is unconsciously to confess a secret unfaith in their authenticity and authority which nothing has thus far justified. The criticism of texts and codices has done nothing but good; and the higher criticism of the sources and composition of the Sacred Books must ultimately do still more good, by enabling us to understand how the Providence of God has preserved for our instruction and edification in these later times, so many records of former revelations given to the fathers in the Prophets. But there is yet another criticism which is higher still, the highest criticism of all, though it may be practised by you and me as well as by the most learned and accomplished critics. Textual criticism is properly and necessarily microscopic; it is occupied with letters, words and phrases; so that a

man might be a perfect textual critic, and yet never really know the Gospel. What is called the higher criticism is broader in its scope; yet its true domain is merely the sources, the composition, the structure and the history of documents. The highest criticism of which I speak is immediately addressed to the divine realities which give all their value to the documents and everything connected with them. The most imperfect translation of the most imperfect codex of any one of the gospels reveals to the least critical of readers the record of a Life, the lineaments of a Character, and the evidence of a Person, which have drawn from millions of hearts and souls the verdict, that is to say the criticism, Truly this is the Son of God! Let us not be misled by a mere word. Criticism, after all, is nothing more than an exercise of judgment; and in the judgment of life and character the student may be far less trustworthy than the peasant or the man of business. Only the virtuous man can rightly judge the virtue of a character; only a spiritual man can rightly judge the evidence of spiritual qualities; only a holy man can recognize holiness; only the pure in heart can see God. So it may happen, and it happens every day, that the Son of God, revealed in the story of the Gospels, is seen, and known and worshipped by very babes in knowledge, while the wise and learned neither see nor know Him. It is with the heart that a man believeth unto righteousness. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God! That, surely, is the highest criticism of all which brings to the investigation of a subject the only instrument with which it can be seen, or known, or rightly judged; and

it is by the exercise of that highest of all critical faculties that the adoring recognition of mankind in general has been given, and always will be given, to the self-evident divinity of Jesus Christ.

Let it not be said that such a judgment is not a truly rational judgment because it is not consciously reached by the forms and processes of logic. What we call the common sense of mankind on any subject is never reached in that way. Yet it is always a satisfaction when such a judgment can be justified to the understanding and the reason; and I wish now to suggest one line of thought out of many which seem to me to show that the Life and Character of Jesus Christ, as they are portrayed in the Gospels, are alone sufficient to convince the reason that He was verily the Son of God.

It has been well said that no one but a man of the highest genius should expose himself to the dangers of deceit. One falsehood leads to another, and that to a third, and soon, until the man is involved in a labyrinth from which there is no escape. Sometimes memory proves treacherous; the unfortunate forgets what he has said, and then he contradicts himself to his own confusion, as is often seen in courts of justice and elsewhere. The curious tricks of chance and circumstance can never be foreseen. Demonstrations of the truth come forward in the strangest way, by the oddest and most whimsical means, and in such a form that they can be neither faced down nor eluded by the most plausible denials. Hence, unless a man could be sure that he will never forget a word of the falsehood he is tempted to

utter, unless he had more than prophetic foresight to anticipate the possibilities of chance, and unless he could assure himself of a more than diabolical power to cover one falsehood with another to the end of time—unless, in short, he were endowed with the ingenuity, the versatility and the very genius of the Father of lies, he can never be certain that the idlest falsehood in the world might not involve him in ruin.

The most difficult of all falsehoods is the simulation of character. Even when its purpose is innocent, as in the dramatic art, nothing short of genius suffices to ensure success. The player struts and frets one little hour upon the stage, and yet, though thousands of well-educated and laborious people study hard to represent particular characters in the few brief scenes of a play, not one in a thousand of them all attains to excellence. One false ring in the voice, the least exaggeration of display, a momentary lapse of memory, dispels the illusion he is striving to produce ; and so, with every aid that art can furnish, the actor fails to sustain a character for the brief hour of his engagement. When an actor does succeed, the world raves of his genius. Fame and fortune are his own, because the task of simulating character is recognized to be one of the most difficult that man can undertake.

It is very clear that the difficulty must increase or diminish with the complexity or the simplicity of the character which is assumed. An actor might easily succeed as Horatio who would make a sorry failure as the wise, mad Prince of Denmark. To represent the highest characters

of the drama nothing less than the highest genius will avail. And all this, though a higher genius than the actor's has already conceived the character, predisposed its situations, and composed the very words the actor is to speak. That is the poet's task. How wonderful it is! How impossible for anything but genius to achieve! Since time began, not twenty men have mastered it, and only one of them reigns like a sun in the firmament of art; the noblest of the rest are like noon-day moons beside him. Thus, perfectly to simulate a great human character demands the loftiest efforts of two men of genius; one to create it, and the other to assume it in the action of a few brief scenes.

What should we think of a person who should attempt—not for an hour upon the stage, not in the predetermined situations of a drama, not in the presence of a limited and sympathetic audience, but for years together, under every circumstance that friendship could create or malignity devise, in the familiarity of daily intercourse and in the very hour and article of death—what should we think of a person who should undertake both to improvise and to simulate, not only the mightiest and most majestic of human characters, but a character which transcends the utmost reach of human imagination, the Character of the Eternal Son of God? Yet, according to the Gospels, Jesus did conceive that Character, bore it for a life-time, never failed nor faltered in it, lived it through, and died in it, with its celestial glories radiant in His crown of thorns. To pretend that a few uneducated and deluded fishermen could have constructed such a Character is sheer absurdity; and only to simulate

that Character successfully would have sufficed to prove that Jesus must be more than man. To sustain it faultlessly would have surpassed the power of an archangel ruined. To have borne it falsely through a life of perfect innocence, with nothing to be gained by it but the reward of infamous and enormous guilt, would have been to present the impossible spectacle of principled mendacity as the motive of spotless holiness, and of consummate wisdom acting for a whole life-time with consummate folly. Yet that is the Character which the Christ sustained, and nowhere in the action or the utterance of that transcendent drama has the world, to this day, found one flaw. To this day His calm challenge to His enemies remains unanswered: Which of you convicteth Me of fault? The world has sought to find one single blot in that most marvelous Life that would be inconsistent with the perfectness of the Eternal Son of God; and it has sought in vain. Faults in His followers, God help them, it has found enough. Flaws in the Gospels it has magnified more than enough. In the very act of doing so, it has shown the inanity of the idea that the Gospel story is, or can be, an invention. But of Christ Himself the world is still forced to repeat the verdict of unhappy Pilate, and confesses that it finds no fault in this Man—not one word, one act, nor one single gesture that mars the majesty or sweetness of His Divine Humanity. The *Character* which He claimed is perfectly original; it is without a parallel in human imagination. His *method of discourse* was without a model, as it is without a copy; and sayings erroneously attributed to Him by apocryphal writers are

as easily distinguished from His true sayings as modern English from the English of Chaucer. His *Life* would be inconceivable, if it were not a fact. Rousseau, comparing His *death* with that of Socrates, makes the just distinction that "Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus died like a God." Taking the whole together, we may safely say that the conception alone, and much more the perfect presentation of it, would be impossible, if it were not true. The coldest, calmest reasoning compels us to the utterance of the amazed centurion, Truly, this was the Son of God!

For my own part, I am frank to confess that this argument is that which, more than any other, constrains me to believe the Gospel to be self-evidently true. I read the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, in which the evangelist has recorded Christ's last prayer on this earth—a prayer made in the immediate prospect of His death. It does not trouble me in the least to think that this or that verse may not contain the exact words used by the Saviour, or that other words which He did use may have been forgotten and omitted after many years. That prayer, on the face of it, is not an historical fiction of the evangelist; it is transparently a report. Satisfied of its substantial accuracy as a report, I examine it, not coldly but appreciatively and sympathetically. I am moved by its unspeakable tenderness, by the pathos of its self-forgetfulness, by its great humility, by its wondrous majesty, in all of which I see the perfect dutifulness of a child of man together with the consciousness and the recollections of

the Son of God. The very gesture is impressive. "Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work that Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with the glory that I had with Thee before the world was. I have manifested Thy Name unto the men that Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me, and they have kept Thy word. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as We are. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world; and the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be one as We are one. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me. Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold Thy glory which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me." I ask myself, Are these the words of an unsound mind? and I reply that if ever there was sanity on

earth, it is in these words and in the Man who spoke them face to face with death. But if these are words of sanity, and if the Man Who spoke them was a sane Man, then these words are true, and the Man Who spoke them was the Son of God, preparing to return into the well-remembered glory He had had with the Eternal Father before the world was. No other alternative is possible. The writer of the Fourth Gospel never did, and never could have fabricated Jesus Christ ; never did, and never could have imagined such a Son of God; never did, nor could, nor would, have been guilty of the amazing blasphemy of putting such words into the mouth of any man who had not spoken them. In a time of great perplexity it was these words of Jesus Christ—of which I am confident that criticism can never take away the self-evident, self-demonstrating power —that enabled me, nay, compelled me, to believe that He Who spoke them could have been none other than the Son of God, and consequently that the Gospel story is and must be substantially true. That point settled, it followed merely as a corollary that the Church He founded here on earth must still exist, and that the one Faith of its Head and Master, once committed to that Church, must be still held by that Body. Or, in other words, that Christianity, as it is held and professed by nineteen-twentieths of the followers of Christ, must certainly be true in those particulars, at least, in which they still remain one in faith and life.

But is not the very notion of an incarnation of Godhead in the person of any man inherently incredible? In the

world of mythology it is most assuredly so; but not so in the world of science. In the last lecture we saw how the Divine Reason may abide in this reasonable, though finite, universe, and how the Divine Power may be immanent therein, while neither the one nor the other is ever separated from the Divine Essence. Thus we saw how the universe in all its parts is a perpetual evidence of the Divine Presence in it. We saw moreover that it is in man himself that the reason and holiness of God are made most clearly evident by the intellectual and moral nature which must have been derived from God as surely as life and physical strength. Thus nature itself is an embodiment of God, so far as it is possible for nature to embody the Divine; and every living man, in all but one respect, is an incarnation of God. That one respect is his individual personality. Every man's personality is his own, or rather it is himself, since it is that which differentiates him from every other creature of God. Neither nature in general nor the individual man are incarnations of the Supreme Personality of God. Yet it is not impossible, and therefore not incredible, that, as God reveals His reason and His power in nature and in man, He might also reveal His Person in the highest form in which such a revelation can be made to creatures like ourselves. That form could be no higher than our own, since ours is the highest we are capable of apprehending. It must therefore be a human form; and yet it could not be the form of any man having a personal individuality of his own, for then the personality of that individual man would be revealed, not the very personality of God. It seems, then,

that no man born into the world as other men are could have been a true Theophorus, an Incarnation of the Divine Person. A body must be specially prepared, a true human body with a true and perfect human nature, but so united with the Divine Nature as, with It, to be one unique and perfect Personality, at once human and divine. In such a God-man God could be incarnate and reveal Himself to the utmost extent to which even God can ever reveal Himself to creatures of our order in creation. In such a God-man we believe He did reveal Himself. We find nothing incredible about it, not even His amazing goodness and condescension ; but in what has just been said there is an illustration of the closeness with which every essential part of a true Christology fits in with every other part. Thus it is sometimes asked why Jesus Christ must needs have been conceived and born in any extraordinary way, and some modern theologians have been hasty in concluding that the story of his Virgin-birth is merely legendary, or, at most, of merely secondary importance. But if Christ was truly the Son of God, sent into the world to reveal the Divine Personality, the story of the Virgin-birth is necessarily true, since in no mere son of man could the sublime Personality of God be manifested to the sons of men. The more we study the gospels with the purpose of veraciously appreciating the Character and Person of Jesus Christ, the more surely, I believe, will that highest criticism constrain us to find in Him at once "the highest, holiest Manhood," and "all the fulness of the Godhead" bodily revealed. After such a study of the gospels, we are prepared to understand

the calm conviction with which an Apostle wrote: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of Life—for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us—that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ."

But here, it will be said, we are touching the miraculous side of Christianity, and we shall be told that the nineteenth century is incredulous of miracle. Strange, is it not, that a century which has accomplished thousands of wonders that any former century would have regarded as miracles, should reject the miraculous? What are these nineteenth century miracles? Are they violations of the laws of nature? Are they suspensions of the established order of nature? Are they arbitrary interferences with the course of nature? Not at all. They are simply intelligent applications of the laws established in the orderly course of nature, so as to produce results which we desire. By his intelligence man is enabled more and more to assume the lordship of the unintelligent creation, not by violating, or suspending, or interfering with, the laws of the Creator, but by learning what those laws are, and by applying them to bring about certain desired results. Man himself is a part of nature, and whatever man does is within the course and

order of nature. When he changes the face of nature, clearing it of primeval forests, planting a continent with new flora and introducing new fauna, turning the course of streams, draining natural lakes and profoundly modifying even the meteorological operations of the atmosphere, all this is as much within the course of nature and as thoroughly according to the laws of nature as the ebb and flow of tides or the evolution and differentiation of species. But if, as we believe, the Creator Himself abides in nature, then there is nothing incredible or unreasonable in the thought that He can apply the laws which He Himself has made, and which He alone perfectly understands, in countless ways of which man has thus far no knowledge. If He should ever do so, it might seem to human ignorance that the laws of nature had been over-ruled or suspended, not because it must be so, but because it would seem to men to be so. In the sense of a violation, or suspension, or interference with the laws of nature—which are as much the laws of God as the Ten Commandmants—I do not believe there ever was a miracle; and in any other sense a miracle is neither more nor less than an unexplained phenomenon. In any other sense, therefore, nature itself is one continuous and universal miracle; since neither nature itself nor any one of its phenomena has been or can be explained. Science, we are told, takes no account of the supernatural; and yet science itself, when it rises highest and sees furthest, confesses that the nature it investigates must have issued from a source beyond nature, so that the supernatural is the very origin and base of nature. Thus science testifies at last, as

history testifies from first to last, that—to use the language of Max Muller—"nothing is so natural as the supernatural."

Now, if the Origin and Cause of all nature were to manifest Himself in the Form of a Man, I submit to you that it would be incredible that He should not do some things, nay, innumerable things, that would seem to be miraculous to other men simply because other men could not know how they were done. So clear is this, that, if there were no miraculous element in the Gospel story, the absence of miracle would be a valid objection to the truth of the story. Men would rightly refuse to believe that Divinity could appear among men without exhibiting some signs of more than human knowledge in some marvellous and inexplicable acts of power. Not, however, because, in such a case, Divinity must abrogate its own laws, but because it could, and surely would, apply those laws in innumerable ways of which even the science of the nineteenth century knows nothing.

I confess that I am not greatly concerned at the ingenious attacks which are directed against particular miracles related by the evangelists. I am not at all disturbed when I am told that the occasional "troubling" of the pool of Bethesda—which the evangelist himself supposed to be done by an angel—was a perfectly natural phenomenon, which may be witnessed to this day in at least one other well at Jerusalem; but I am amused to see how the attack upon the miracle brings out a confirmation of the history. I am not disconcerted when Mr. Huxley turns all the bat-

teries of his great knowledge and his piercing wit on what he calls "the swine-miracle" of Gadara; but I am interested to observe how strangely the new investigations of hypnotism are showing possibilities of a double or triple consciousness in human beings which would go far to account for all the recorded phenomena of demoniac possession; and I am yet more deeply interested to learn that possession itself, that is to say, the complete possibility of a domination of one personal and voluntary being by the will of another, is at last a verified fact of science. It would not disconcert me in the least if every one of our Saviour's recorded miracles were to be explained to have been only natural occurrences, so far as the forces or powers applied in doing them are concerned. I myself believe all of them to have been such, and I fully expect modern science to explain some of those marvellous works in that way. When it shall have done so, it will but confirm the credibility of the Gospel narrative; it will take nothing from the evidence of Divinity in Him Who wrought such wonders at a time when no science had discovered how they could be done. It has been often said that miracle, which was once regarded as the main proof of the truth of Christianity, has now become its greatest difficulty; but if I am not mistaken, the time is fast approaching when science will remove the greater part of that difficulty, and simultaneously confirm the Gospel history, by showing that some, at least, of the Gospel miracles were no more miraculous than a conversation through the telephone or even the lifting of a pebble from the ground. Let us not be too easily scared by a

mere word used in an obscure sense. Miracle is a word which need scare no Christian from His faith, if he remembers that a miracle is nothing more than an unexplained event or an inexplicable phenomenon, that is to say, a fact or an occurrence, the cause or method of which he does not know. It is often hard enough to draw just conclusions from partial knowledge; it is always folly to attempt to reason from our ignorance; it is the very lunacy of self-conceit to imagine that nothing can be true which we are not able to explain. If our beliefs were to be limited by our power to explain facts and their phenomena, we should be able to believe in nothing—not even in our own existence.

With only one other suggestion concerning the evidences of Christianity this most imperfect course of lectures must be closed. In all scientific investigation it is an accepted rule that assertions of fact which have any reasonable appearance of probability ought to be subjected to a process of rigorous verification, or, in other words, that they must be practically tested. We are more than willing that Christianity shall be put to that test. We insist that it has a just claim to be verified. No candid man can affirm that Christianity is intrinsically absurd or incredible; we maintain, on the contrary, that, to say the very least, it is highly probable, and that the advance of science is daily adding to its probability. On the strictest scientific grounds, therefore, we are entitled to say that no man can rationally reject it without testing it for himself.

The test is possible; it is simple; it is rational; it is not only safe—it is salutary; and it is proposed by Christ Himself. No one denies that Jesus Christ was a great Teacher, and in ethics the greatest of all Teachers. Consequently it is possible, rational, safe and salutary to accept Him as our Teacher and adopt His moral principles of life. If we do so, He Himself assures us that we shall be happier and better men and that as we grow in happiness and goodness we shall likewise grow in knowledge and discernment of the truth or falsehood of His doctrine. "Take my yoke upon you," He says; and by this He does not mean some artificial rules of life which He would lay upon us, but that yoke of meek and loving dutifulness which He Himself bore in His earthly life. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, and ye shall find rest in your lives." That is the temporal reward of those who take Christ as their supreme Teacher; but another and more precious promise is attached to the same course. "If any man is willing," He says, "to do the will of my Father which is in heaven, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." We are ready to stand by that test and to abide its consequences; and we hold it to be only rational to test Christ's method in the only way in which it can be tested.

We admit, indeed, that the test proposed calls into play other faculties than those which are exercised in logic; but then Christ appeals to the whole man and not only to his powers of syllogistic argument. It is to the whole man that He offers His guidance, not only to his reason. It is to the whole man that He promises the demonstration of the truth

which is Himself. And man is more than mind; he is a living soul, with affections, passions, principles of life and judgment, which no syllogistic process can reduce to forms of logic. In all matters of life, that is to say in all matters of supreme importance, it is the man, and not merely his reason, which sits in judgment and believes or disbelieves. "There is a sense," says Principal Caird, "in which all intense feeling transcends the limits of logic, and is capable of a richness and fulness of content which baffle definition and outstrip the comprehension of the hard and fast categories of the understanding. Our most exalted spiritual experiences are those which are least capable of being expressed by precise logical formulæ." "There are subjects of grave moment and questions of primary importance," says Joubert, "in which the governing ideas ought to spring from the sentiments; all is lost if they are taken from elsewhere. To think what one does not feel is to lie to oneself. Whatever one thinks, he ought to think with his whole being, soul and body." "The heart," says Pascal, "has reasons of its own of which reason knows nothing;" and poor Buckle says that the heart is right. "The emotions," he tells us, "are as much a part of us as the understanding; they are as truthful; they are as likely to be right. Though their view is different from that of the understanding, it is not capricious. They obey fixed laws; they follow an uniform and orderly course; they run in sequences; they have their logic and methods of inference." Professor Tyndal declares that "the circle of human nature is not complete without the arc of feeling and emotion." I think I need not further

press the truth that in all matters of supreme importance, and consequently in all matters of life and religion, the emotional nature, that is to say, the moral nature, is as important a factor in conducing to a just judgment as the understanding or the reason. At all events, I think you will admit that in all such matters, a right state of the moral and emotional nature is an indispensable condition of just judgment.

And a right condition of the moral nature is precisely that which a true following of the ethics of our Lord is calculated to produce. By stilling the turbulence of the passions, by purifying the affections, by exalting the aspirations, it prepares the mind and heart and soul of man for the clear vision of truth. But we are not to think of the ethics of Jesus as a hard and fast code of rules. More than in any or all even of His own recorded precepts, the ethics of Jesus are to be learned by studying Himself. There is no question of conduct so obscure that it may not be resolved at once and positively if a true student of Jesus will only ask himself, What would Jesus Christ have done in this case? The answer will never be ambiguous. The right will always shine out clearer than the light of day; and if the case is such that two or more courses of conduct might be alike lawful, it will always appear that one of them is nobler than the rest, and that the choice of Christ would have been the noblest. I am persuaded that by such a personal following of Christ there will never fail to grow up in the student a more and more vivid sense of the continual and living Presence of the Master whom he follows, which nothing short of the reality of that Presence could account for. I believe, too, that

there will grow in him a wondering love and trust of his Unseen Friend which no logic could formulate; and that, at last, my friends, is the one way, and the only way, to verify the claims of Christianity. Without that verification no other evidence is final or complete for any human soul. After it, other evidences may be useful; they are never indispensable. Professor Ruskin says, "There is but one chance of life in admitting so far the possibility of the truth of Christianity as to try it on its own terms. 'Show me a sign first, and I will come,' you say. 'No,' answers God, 'come first, and then you shall see a sign.'" So it has been in the life of the poetic prophet of this century, Alfred Tennyson. Fifty years ago, he gave the tribute of obedience to the

> "Strong Son of God, Immortal Love
> Whom we, who have not seen His face
> By faith, and faith alone embrace,
> Believing where we cannot prove."

In God, as He is revealed in Christ, the poet found assurance of a hope for men:

> "Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;
> Thou madest man, he knows not why;
> He thinks he was not made to die;
> And Thou has made him; Thou art just!'

Not this faith alone, however, would have made Alfred Tennyson a Christian, if, musing on the mystery of human will, he had not learned to see and say,

> "Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

Having learned that one supreme and indispensable les-

son, and having ruled his will to follow his Master's will, he now can wait serenely for that "Crossing of the Bar" which awaits us all, smiling away the sorrow of the parting hour, and looking for the coming vision of the Friend who has walked beside him all along his earthly journey. So may it be to you and me, my friends. May we, too, have the confidence of a certain faith and the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope when the time shall come for us to cross the bar! As the shadows of the evening gather, may we find ourselves ready and glad to sing the *Nunc Dimittis* of the poet of our time:

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea;

"But such a tide as, moving, seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark!

"For, though from our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar!"

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